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Subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields

Note by the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report updates documents E/1996/97 and Add.1 and E/2001/INF/3. It provides information on the establishment, terms of reference, membership and composition, term of office of members, reporting procedure, frequency of meetings and working methods of subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields.

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Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	4
II.	Subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council	5
A.	Functional commissions	5
1.	Statistical Commission	5
2.	Commission on Population and Development	7
3.	Commission for Social Development	10
4.	Commission on the Status of Women	14
5.	Commission on Narcotic Drugs	17
6.	Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	22
7.	Commission on Science and Technology for Development	24
8.	Commission on Sustainable Development	28
9.	United Nations Forum on Forests	32
B.	Regional commissions	36
1.	Economic Commission for Africa	36
2.	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	39
3.	Economic Commission for Europe	42
4.	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	45
5.	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	47
C.	Standing committees	48
1.	Committee for Programme and Coordination	48
2.	Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations	53
3.	Committee on Negotiations with Intergovernmental Agencies	56
D.	Ad hoc body	56
	Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics	56
E.	Expert bodies composed of governmental experts	57
1.	Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals	57
2.	Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting	61
3.	United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names	62
F.	Expert bodies composed of members serving in their personal capacity	64
1.	Committee for Development Policy	64

2. Committee of Experts on Public Administration 65
3. Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters 67
4. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 69
5. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 70
G. Related bodies 72
1. International Narcotics Control Board 72
2. Executive Board of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women 73
3. Committee for the United Nations Population Award 75
4. Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS 75
III. Subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields 77
Standing bodies 77
1. Committee for Programme and Coordination 77
2. High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation 77
3. United Nations Children's Fund 78
4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development 80
5. United Nations Development Fund for Women 83
6. United Nations Development Programme 85
7. United Nations Environment Programme 88
8. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 90
9. United Nations Population Fund 92
10. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East 95
11. World Food Programme 95
12. Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) 98
13. Peacebuilding Commission 101
14. Human Rights Council 106

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, by resolution 1996/41 of 26 July 1996, which it adopted pursuant to its consideration of the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996, requested the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive document compiling information on the functional commissions and expert groups and bodies and to submit it to the Council. Consequently, a report entitled "Subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields" (E/1996/97) was presented to the Council at its resumed substantive session of 1996. An addendum to that report (E/1996/97/Add.1) provided further information on the working methods of the functional commissions and expert groups of the Council. An updated version of the report was submitted to the Council in a note by the Secretary-General at its substantive session of 2001 (E/2001/INF/3).

2. The number, structure and terms of reference of the subsidiary bodies have since evolved in the context of the ongoing restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields carried out by the Council and the General Assembly, in particular with the aim of achieving the goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[1] and the 2005 World Summit Outcome.[2] Since 1995, the Council has also undertaken major efforts to increase cooperation and coordination among its subsidiary bodies, and between the Council and these bodies, especially in regard to integrated and coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summit meetings. The subsidiary bodies, especially the functional commissions, have continued to adapt their working methods in response to the Council's guidance on greater efficiency, effectiveness and cooperation in the intergovernmental machinery.

3. The present note provides information on the status of the subsidiary bodies of the Council and the Assembly in the economic, social and related fields. It is intended as a reference tool, providing in a readily accessible format information on the intergovernmental and expert machinery in these fields and thereby supporting the intergovernmental mechanisms in the implementation of their respective mandates and goals.

4. For each subsidiary body, information is given concerning its establishment and terms of reference, membership and composition, the term of office of its members, its reporting procedure and the frequency of its sessions. Election of bureaux, multi-year work programmes and working methods are also described, as applicable. Section I contains information on the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, which have been grouped, on the basis of their institutional status, into seven categories: (a) functional commissions, (b) regional commissions, (c) standing committees, (d) ad hoc committees, (e) expert bodies composed of governmental experts, (f) expert bodies composed of members serving in their personal capacity and (g) related bodies.

5. Section III contains information on the subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields.

[1] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[2] See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

II. Subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council

A. Functional commissions

1. Statistical Commission

Terms of reference

6. The Statistical Commission was established by the Council in its resolution 8 (I) of 16 and 18 February 1946. Its terms of reference were set out in resolutions 8 (I), 8 (II) of 21 June 1946 and 1566 (L) of 3 May 1971.

7. In accordance with resolutions 8 (I) and 8 (II), the Commission assists the Council:

(a) In promoting the development of national statistics and the improvement of their comparability;

(b) In the coordination of the statistical work of specialized agencies;

(c) In the development of the central statistical services of the Secretariat;

(d) In advising the organs of the United Nations on general questions relating to the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical information;

(e) In promoting the improvement of statistics and statistical methods generally.

8. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 1566 (L), the Council considered that the ultimate goal of the work of the Commission should be the achievement of an integrated system in the collection, data processing and dissemination of international statistics by the organs and agencies of the United Nations system with special regard to the requirements of reviewing and appraising economic and social progress, taking into account the needs of the developing countries.

Membership and composition

9. In accordance with paragraph 3 of Council resolution 1147 (XLI) of 4 August 1966, the Statistical Commission consists of one representative from each of 24 Member States elected by the Council on the basis of an equitable geographical distribution, according to the following pattern:

(a) Five members from African States;

(b) Four members from Asian States;

(c) Four members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(d) Seven members from Western European and other States;

(e) Four members from Eastern European States.

With a view to securing a balanced representation in the various fields covered by the Commission, the Secretary-General consults with the Governments thus elected before the representatives are nominated by those Governments and confirmed by the Council.

Term of office

10. The term of office of members is four years (Council resolution 591 (XX) of 5 August 1955).

Reporting procedure

11. The Commission reports directly to the Council. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Frequency of meetings

12. The Commission meets annually for four working days (Council resolution 1999/8 of 26 July 1999).

Multi-year programme of work

13. The Commission adopts annually a multi-year programme of work relating to the three subsequent sessions. At its thirty-ninth session, the Commission approved its programme of work for the period 2008-2011.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

14. The Bureau is normally elected at the first meeting of the session. The Bureau serves for two years. This is achieved by electing the Bureau for a period of one year and re-electing those members of the Bureau who continue to be representatives to the Commission at the following session. The Bureau is elected based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution — a member of the Bureau is elected from each of the regions represented on the Commission. The Chairpersonship of the Commission rotates on a geographical basis in principle. There is, at the same time, an understanding among members of the Commission that competence and familiarity with the issues being considered at the session are the most important criteria to be taken into account.

15. To ensure continuity, it is the Commission's normal practice to elect one of the Vice-Chairpersons of the outgoing Bureau to the Chairpersonship of the incoming Bureau.

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

16. There is an understanding among members of the Commission that action on draft proposals and texts should be taken without a vote.

17. There are no Chairperson's summaries as such.

Utilization of informal consultations

18. It has been the practice of the Commission for the Rapporteur to prepare the texts of the draft report in consultation with the Secretariat and members of the Commission. Informal consultations as such do not take place.

Role of the Secretariat

19. The Secretariat traditionally assists the members of the Commission in the drafting of texts, at the request of delegations, not only with regard to substantive issues but also to facilitate the application of United Nations editorial practice.

Inclusion of a general debate in the work programme

20. The Commission holds a general discussion, sequentially, on each agenda item.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

21. It is not the practice of the Commission to hold panel discussions or question-and-answer sessions.

2. Commission on Population and Development

Terms of reference

22. The Population Commission was established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 3 (III) of 3 October 1946. Its original terms of reference are set out in Council resolution 150 (VII) of 10 August 1948.

23. In paragraph 24 of its resolution 49/128 of 19 December 1994, the General Assembly decided that the Commission should be renamed the Commission on Population and Development (see also Economic and Social Council decision 1995/209 of 10 February 1995). In paragraph 23 of the same resolution, the Assembly decided that it, the Council and the Commission should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that would play the primary role in the follow-up to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[3] and that the Commission, as a functional commission assisting the Council, would monitor, review and assess the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels and advise the Council thereon.

24. According to the Commission's terms of reference, which were endorsed by the Council in its resolution 1995/55 of 28 July 1995, the Commission is to assist the Council by:

(a) Arranging for studies and advising the Council on:

(i) Population issues and trends, including determinants and consequences;

(ii) Integrating population and development strategies;

(iii) Population and related development policies and programmes;

(iv) Provision of population assistance, upon request, to developing countries and, on a temporary basis, to countries with economies in transition;

(v) Any other population and development questions on which either the principal or the subsidiary organs of the United Nations or the specialized agencies may seek advice;

[3] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

(b) Monitoring, reviewing and assessing the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development at the national, regional and global levels, identifying reasons for success and failure, and advising the Council thereon. Such considerations shall include:

(i) Adopting a topic-oriented and prioritized multi-year work programme, culminating in a quinquennial review and appraisal of the Programme of Action. That work programme, inter alia, will provide a framework to assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action;

(ii) Monitoring the implementation of the Programme of Action through periodic reports on population trends and policies, population programmes and population and related development activities;

(iii) Reviewing on a regular basis the flow of financial resources and the funding mechanisms to achieve the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action;

(iv) Undertaking a quinquennial review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action and in implementing its recommendations, and reporting its findings to the Council;

(v) Maintaining and enhancing public attention and support for the implementation of the Programme of Action, through the dissemination of its monitoring, review and assessment reports in a concise and clear format;

(vi) Considering the reports of the meetings of inter-agency mechanisms established by the Secretary-General to ensure coordination, collaboration and harmonization in the implementation of the Programme of Action;

(vii) Considering reports on the activities of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for the implementation of the Programme of Action, in accordance with the arrangements adopted by the Economic and Social Council for consultation with those organizations;

(c) Providing appropriate recommendations to the Council, on the basis of an integrated consideration of the reports and issues related to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

25. In addition to those terms of reference, the Council decided that the Commission should review the findings of research and analysis pertaining to the interrelationship between population and development at the national, regional and global levels and advise the Council thereon (resolution 1995/55, para. 3).

Membership and composition

26. In accordance with Council decision 1995/320 of 12 December 1995, the Commission consists of one representative from each of 47 States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies elected by the Council on the basis of an equitable geographical distribution, according to the following pattern:

(a) Twelve members from African States;

(b) Eleven members from Asian States;

(c) Five members from Eastern European States;

(d) Nine members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Ten members from Western European and other States.

27. In its decision 88 (LVIII) of 6 May 1975, the Council decided that, in accordance with established procedures, the Secretary-General should consult with the Governments elected to serve on the Commission about the nomination of their representatives, in order to ensure a balance in representation of the various disciplines covered by the work of the Commission.

28. In order to maintain close liaison with other bodies concerned with population issues, the Commission invites representatives from other functional commissions to take part in its proceedings without the right to vote.

Term of office

29. In its decision 2005/213 of 31 March 2005, the Council decided that the term of office of members of the Commission would be for four regular sessions of the Commission, to begin immediately after the conclusion of the Commission's regular session held after 1 January, following their election by the Council, and to end at the conclusion of the regular session held after 1 January, following the election of the States that were to succeed them as members, unless they were re-elected.

Reporting procedure

30. The Commission reports directly to the Council. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Frequency of meetings

31. The Commission meets annually (General Assembly resolution 49/128 and Council decision 1995/209), usually for five working days.

Multi-year programme of work

32. At its thirty-ninth session, held in 2006, the Commission decided to adopt a multi-year programme of work limited to a two-year planning horizon and to select a special theme for each year based on the Programme of Action (Commission resolution 2006/1).

Election and term of office of the Bureau

33. The Bureau of the Commission is elected at the first meeting of each session, which is held immediately following the closure of the preceding session for the sole purpose of the election (Commission decision 2004/2 and Council decision 2005/213). The members of the Bureau hold office for one year. In order to ensure continuity, efforts have been made to elect at least one member of the previous Bureau to the incoming one.

34. At its thirty-seventh session, held in 2004, the Commission decided to establish a system of regular geographical rotation for the chairmanship of the Commission (Commission decision 2004/2; see also its decision 2005/2).

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

35. There is no formal or informal agreement that action should be taken by consensus. The Commission takes action through decisions and resolutions.

Utilization of informal consultations

36. The Commission holds informal consultations on all texts under consideration.

Role of the Secretariat

37. The Secretariat plays an active role in promoting action by the Commission and provides support to Member States in the drafting of texts for action.

Inclusion of a general debate in the work programme

38. The Commission holds general discussions on specific topics.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

39. The Commission holds panel discussions and engages in question-and-answer sessions.

3. Commission for Social Development

Terms of reference

40. The Social Commission was established by the Council in its resolution 10 (II) of 21 June 1946. As a result of a comprehensive reappraisal of the role of the Commission, the Council, in resolution 1139 (XLI) of 29 July 1966, renamed it the Commission for Social Development in order to clarify its role as a preparatory body of the Council in the whole range of social development policy.

41. In accordance with Council resolutions 10 (II) and 1139 (XLI), the terms of reference of the Commission are:

(a) To advise the Council on social questions of a general character and give particular attention to policies designed to promote social progress, to the establishment of social objectives and programme priorities and to social research in areas affecting social and economic development;

(b) To advise the Council on practical measures that may be needed in the social field, including questions of social welfare, community development, urbanization, housing and social defence;

(c) To advise the Council on measures needed for the coordination of activities in the social field and for the recording and exchange of experience among Governments in the formulation and execution of social development policies;

(d) To advise the Council on such international agreements and conventions on any of these matters, as may be required, and on their execution;

(e) To report to the Council on the extent to which the recommendations of the United Nations in the field of social policy are being carried out;

(f) To advise the Council also on vital social problems in respect of which action or recommendations may be required either by the Council itself or by the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 2035 (XX).

42. In its resolution 50/161 of 22 December 1995, the General Assembly decided that the Assembly, through its role in policy formulation, the Council, through its role in overall guidance and coordination, and the Commission should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental process in the follow-up to the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development.[4]

43. In its resolution 1996/7 of 22 July 1996, on the follow-up to the Summit and the future role of the Commission, the Council added to its terms of reference, deciding that the Commission should assist it in monitoring, reviewing and appraising the progress achieved and problems encountered in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action and advise it thereon, and should:

(a) Improve international understanding on social development through, inter alia, the exchange of information and experience;

(b) Integrate, within the framework of the follow-up to the Summit, consideration of issues relating to the situation of social groups, including a review of relevant United Nations programmes of action related to such groups, and consideration of other sectoral issues;

(c) Identify emerging issues affecting social development that require urgent consideration, and make substantive recommendations thereon;

(d) Make recommendations regarding social development to the Council;

(e) Elaborate practical measures aimed at furthering recommendations of the Summit;

(f) Identify issues requiring improved system-wide coordination, taking into account substantive inputs from different organizations of the United Nations system, as well as the contributions of other functional commissions concerned, in order to assist the Council in its coordination functions;

(g) Maintain and enhance public awareness and support for the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action.

44. The Commission also has the primary responsibility for the follow-up to the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly,[5] bearing in mind the links with the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see Council resolution 2005/11 of 21 July 2005).

Membership and composition

45. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/7 of 22 July 1996, the Commission is composed of 46 members elected by the Council from

[4] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[5] General Assembly resolution S-24/2, annex.

among the States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies on the basis of an equitable geographical distribution, according to the following pattern:

(a) Twelve members from African States;

(b) Ten members from Asian States;

(c) Nine members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(d) Five members from Eastern European States;

(e) Ten members from Western European and other States.

In accordance with Council resolution 1139 (XLI), section IV, paragraph 1, the States elected to the Commission should nominate candidates who hold key positions in the planning or execution of national social development policies or other persons qualified to discuss the formulation of social policies in more than one sector of development. With a view to securing a balanced representation in the various fields covered by the Commission, the Secretary-General consults with the Governments selected before the representatives are finally nominated by these Governments and confirmed by the Council.

Term of office

46. In its decision 2002/210 of 13 February 2002, on improvement of the work of the Commission, the Council decided that the term of office of the members of the Commission would be for four regular sessions of the Commission, to begin immediately after the conclusion of work of the Commission's regular session held after 1 January following their election by the Council, and to end at the conclusion of the regular session held after 1 January following the election of the States that were to succeed them as members of the Commission, unless they were re-elected, and that, in that context, the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1798 (XVII) of 11 December 1962 would apply only to the substantive part of the sessions of the Commission.

Reporting procedure

47. The Commission reports directly to the Council. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Frequency of meetings

48. The Commission meets annually (Council resolution 1996/7), usually for eight working days.

Multi-year programme of work

49. In its resolution 2005/11, the Council decided that in order to fulfil its mandate, beginning with its forty-fifth session, the work of the Commission would be organized in a series of two-year action-oriented implementation cycles, which would include a review segment and a policy segment and that the Commission should strengthen the connection between its review of implementation and its policy recommendations. The Commission adopts a theme for each review and policy cycle.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

50. In its decision 2002/210, the Council decided that the Commission, immediately following the closure of a regular session, would hold the first meeting of its subsequent regular session for the sole purpose of electing the new Chairperson and other members of the Bureau, in accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council. The members of the Bureau hold office for one year.

51. There is no established practice for rotation of members of the Bureau other than that based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The Chairpersonship of the Commission rotates on a geographical basis but the precise sequence may vary. It is not established practice for a senior Vice-Chairperson to become Chairperson at the following session.

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

52. There is no formal agreement that action should be taken by consensus. While the Commission endeavours to take action by consensus, there are occasions when votes may be requested.

53. The Commission normally takes action through the adoption of draft resolutions, draft decisions and agreed conclusions. In its resolution 2006/18 of 26 July 2006, on the future organization and methods of work of the Commission, the Council decided that the outcome of the Commission's review should be in the form of a chairperson's summary, done in close coordination with other members of the Bureau, and that the policy segment should have a negotiated outcome with action-oriented strategies.

Utilization of informal consultations

54. It has been the practice of the Commission to hold informal consultations on all draft proposals and its draft report.

Role of the Secretariat

55. The Secretariat traditionally assists the members of the Commission in the drafting of texts, at the request of delegations, not only with regard to substantive issues but also to facilitate the application of United Nations editorial practice.

Inclusion of a general debate in the work programme

56. In lieu of a general debate, the Commission holds a general discussion on each agenda item.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

57. The Commission has held a number of panel meetings with invited experts.

58. The Commission holds a dialogue with non-governmental organizations as part of its annual work programme.

4. Commission on the Status of Women

Terms of reference

59. The Commission on the Status of Women was established by the Council in its resolution 11 (II) of 21 June 1946 to prepare recommendations and reports to the Council on promoting women's rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields and to make recommendations to the Council on urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women's rights with the object of implementing the principle that men and women should have equal rights, and to develop proposals to give effect to such recommendations. In its resolution 1987/22 of 26 May 1987, the Council decided to expand the terms of reference of the Commission to include the functions of promoting the objectives of equality, development and peace, monitoring the implementation of measures for the advancement of women, and reviewing and appraising progress made at the national, subregional, regional, sectoral and global levels.

60. In its resolution 50/203 of 22 December 1995 on the implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women,[6] the General Assembly decided that the Assembly, the Council and the Commission, in accordance with their respective mandates and with Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993 and other relevant resolutions, should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that would play the primary role in the overall policymaking and follow-up, and in coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the Platform for Action adopted at the Conference.[7] The Assembly also decided that the Commission, as a functional commission assisting the Council, should have a central role in the monitoring of the implementation of the Platform for Action within the United Nations system and in advising the Council thereon.

61. In its resolution 1996/6 of 22 July 1996, on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Council further modified the terms of reference of the Commission. It decided that the Commission should:

(a) Assist the Council in monitoring, reviewing and appraising progress achieved and problems encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[8] at all levels, and should advise the Council thereon;

(b) Continue to ensure support for mainstreaming a gender perspective in United Nations activities and develop further its catalytic role in that regard in other areas;

(c) Identify issues where United Nations system-wide coordination needed to be improved in order to assist the Council in its coordination function;

(d) Identify emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men that required consideration and make substantive recommendations thereon;

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[6] See *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13).

[7] Ibid., chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[8] Ibid., chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

(e) Maintain and enhance public awareness and support for the implementation of the Platform for Action.

62. The Commission also has the primary responsibility for follow-up to the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly.[9]

Membership and composition

63. In accordance with Council resolution 1989/45 of 24 May 1989, the Commission consists of one representative from each of 45 Member States elected by the Council on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, according to the following pattern:

(a) Thirteen members from African States;

(b) Eleven members from Asian States;

(c) Nine members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(d) Eight members from Western European and other States;

(e) Four members from Eastern European States.

With a view to securing a balanced representation in the various fields covered by the Commission, the Secretary-General consults with the Governments thus elected before the representatives are finally nominated by those Governments and confirmed by the Council.

Term of office

64. In its decision 2002/234 of 24 July 2002, the Council decided that the term of office of the members of the Commission would be for four regular sessions of the Commission, to begin immediately after the conclusion of work of the Commission's regular session held after 1 January, following their election by the Council, and to end at the conclusion of the regular session held after 1 January, following the election of the States that were to succeed them as members of the Commission, unless they were re-elected.

Reporting procedure

65. The Commission reports directly to the Council. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council.*

Frequency of meetings

66. In pursuance of Council resolution 1987/21 of 26 May 1987 and Council decision 1999/257 of 28 July 1999, the Commission meets annually for a period of 10 working days.

Multi-year programme of work

67. The Commission elaborated a multi-year programme of work for the first time in 1987 (see Council resolution 1987/24 of 26 May 1987). In 1996, following the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a multi-year

[9] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

programme of work was adopted for the period 1997-2000 (Council resolution 1996/6) and was subsequently implemented.

68. In its resolution 2006/9 of 25 July 2006, on the future organization and methods of work of the Commission, the Council decided that: (a) from its fifty-first session (held in 2007), the Commission would consider one priority theme at each session, based on the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly; (b) the Commission would continue to hold, on an annual basis, a general discussion on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the Assembly; and (c) the annual interactive high-level round-table meeting would focus on experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

69. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/21, the members of the Bureau serve for two years. Since the Commission meets annually, members are elected at the beginning of every other session. In its decision 2002/234, the Council decided that, starting with the forty-seventh session of the Commission in 2003, the Commission, immediately following the closure of a regular session, would hold the first meeting of its subsequent regular session for the sole purpose of electing the new Chairperson and other members of the Bureau, in accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council.

70. There is no formalized practice for rotation of members of the Bureau other than that based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

71. There is an understanding among members of the Commission on the desirability of taking action by consensus. If consensus is not possible, the Commission will take action by voting.

72. The Commission decided, at its fortieth session, in 1996, that the results of its dialogues would normally be reflected in concise, action-oriented agreed conclusions, and adopted agreed conclusions for the first time at that session.

73. In its resolution 2006/9, the Council decided that there would be one outcome to annual discussions on the priority theme, in the form of agreed conclusions, negotiated by all States, which should both identify gaps and challenges in the implementation of previous commitments and make action-oriented recommendations for all States, relevant intergovernmental bodies, mechanisms and entities of the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders.

Utilization of informal consultations

74. The Commission holds informal consultations as required.

Role of the Secretariat

75. The Secretariat provides information, identifies options available and assists in drafting proposals, at the request of delegations. It prepares proposals for the organization of the sessions and the conduct of business and assists in drafting the final report.

Inclusion of a general debate

76. The Commission does not hold a general debate. It does, however, engage in a brief general discussion at the beginning of each session on the primary agenda item, such as the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session of the Assembly.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

77. In pursuance of Commission agreed conclusions 1996/1, on the Commission's methods of work for dealing with the implementation of the Platform for Action, the Commission holds substantive panel discussions; participants are decided upon in close consultation with the members of the Bureau. The Commission also holds interactive expert panel discussions on ways and means to accelerate the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme (see Council resolution 2006/9, paras. 4 and 6). In addition to the panel discussions, the Commission makes provision for a dialogue among Governments on the various agenda items.

5. Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Terms of reference

(i) Functional commission of the Council

78. The Commission was established by the Council in its resolution 9 (I) of 16 February 1946, which laid down the following terms of reference:

> The Commission shall:
>
> (a) Assist the Council in exercising such powers of supervision over the application of international conventions and agreements dealing with narcotic drugs as may be assumed by or conferred on the Council;
>
> (b) Carry out such functions entrusted to the League of Nations Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs by the international conventions in narcotic drugs as the Council may find necessary to assume and continue;
>
> (c) Advise the Council on all matters pertaining to the control of narcotic drugs, and prepare such draft international conventions as may be necessary;
>
> (d) Consider what changes may be required in the existing machinery for the international control of narcotic drugs and submit proposals thereon to the Council;
>
> (e) Perform such other functions relating to narcotic drugs as the Council may direct.

(ii) Treaty and normative functions

Drug control conventions

79. The Commission performs the functions assigned to it by the international drug control treaties, particularly article 8 of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 30 March 1961, as amended by the Protocol of 25 March 1972, article 17 of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 21 February 1971, and article 21 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 19 December 1988. Pursuant to these provisions, the Commission is, inter alia, authorized to consider all matters pertaining to the aims of the Conventions and to their implementation. As a treaty organ under the 1961 and 1971 Conventions, the Commission decides, on the basis of recommendations of the World Health Organization, to place, remove or transfer narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances under international control. Pursuant to the 1988 Convention, the Commission decides, upon the recommendation of the International Narcotics Control Board, to place precursor chemicals frequently used for the manufacture of illicit drugs in Table I or Table II of the 1988 Convention, or on their transfer.

(iii) General Assembly: countering the world drug problem

80. The General Assembly, at its twentieth special session on the world drug problem (8-10 June 1998), requested Member States to report biennially to the Commission on their efforts to meet the goals and targets for 2003 and 2008, agreed upon in the Political Declaration.[10] The Assembly requested the Commission to analyse those reports in order to enhance the cooperative effort to combat the world drug problem.

(iv) Governing body of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme

81. The Council, by resolution 1991/38 of 21 June 1991, requested the Commission to give policy guidance to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and to monitor its activities.

82. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/185 C, section XVI, of 20 December 1991, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs approves, on the basis of the proposals of the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the programme budget of the Fund of the Programme and the administrative and programme support costs budget. The General Assembly, by the same resolution, established the Fund as of 1 January 1992, under the direct responsibility of the Executive Director of the Programme for the purpose of financing the Programme's operational activities. The Fund accounts for over 90 per cent of the resources available to the United Nations for drug control.

Membership

83. The membership of the Commission was increased from 40 to 53 by the Council in its resolution 1991/49 of 21 June 1991, with the following distribution of seats among the regional groups:

(a) Eleven for African States;

[10] General Assembly resolution S-20/2, annex.

(b) Eleven for Asian States;

(c) Ten for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(d) Six for Eastern European States;

(e) Fourteen for Western European and other States;

(f) One seat to rotate between the Asian States and the Latin American and Caribbean States every four years.

84. In accordance with Council resolution 845 (XXXII), section II, and 1147 (XLI), members are elected (a) from among the States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies and the Parties to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, (b) with due regard to the adequate representation of countries that are important producers of opium or coca leaves, of countries that are important in the field of the manufacture of narcotic drugs, and of countries in which drug addiction or the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs constitutes an important problem and (c) taking into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

Term of office

85. The term of office of members is four years (Council resolution 1156 (XLI), sect. II, of 5 August 1966).

Reporting procedure

86. The Commission reports directly to the Council. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Frequency of meetings

87. By resolution 1991/39 of 21 June 1991, the Economic and Social Council decided that the Commission should meet annually for a period not exceeding eight working days. The Council also decided that the Commission should establish the Committee of the Whole to examine specific technical items on the agenda referred to it by the Commission, as well as draft decisions and draft resolutions, the Committee to meet concurrently with the annual session of the Commission for a period not exceeding four working days.

88. In accordance with the established budget cycle for the Fund of the Programme and the methodology to be followed in that regard (see Commission resolution 13 (XXXVI)), the Commission approves the final budget of the Fund for the current biennium and the initial budget for the next biennium at a reconvened session held in the final months of odd-numbered years. That practice has been endorsed by the Council in a series of decisions.

Multi-year programme of work

89. The agenda of the Commission at each session indicates the specific themes to be addressed during the thematic debate.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

90. With effect from 2000, the Commission, at the end of each session, elects the Bureau for its next session (Council resolution 1999/30 of 28 July 1999). The newly elected Bureau plays an active role in the preparations for the session, through intersessional meetings of the Commission convened to address organizational and substantive matters related to its work. Another goal of the intersessional meetings of the Commission is to provide continuous and effective policy guidance to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (Council resolution 1999/30).

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

91. Action by the Commission is taken through resolutions and decisions. Decisions and resolutions are generally taken by consensus; however, decisions provided for under articles 2 and 3 of the 1971 Convention and article 12 of the 1988 Convention are taken by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Commission. To adopt these decisions, an affirmative vote of at least 35 members of the Commission is required. Other decisions taken by the Commission under the Single Convention are subject to a majority requirement, as provided for in the Commission's rules of procedure.

Utilization of informal consultations

92. Informal consultations have proven to be very useful to refine or merge draft resolutions, as well as to finalize the items to be included in the provisional agenda and the documentation requirements for the next session.

Role of the Secretariat

93. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme serves as the substantive secretariat of the Commission.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

94. During the thematic debate, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs makes use of panellists selected for their expertise, with due consideration to geographical balance, for the purpose of holding an interactive dialogue in the Commission.

95. During the operational segment of its agenda, a dialogue is held between Member States (donor, middle-income and recipient countries) and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme on priorities and policies, on the basis of the annual report of the Executive Director on the activities of the Programme and proposals for the budget of the Fund.

Subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

(i) Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East

96. The Subcommission was established, subject to the approval of the Council, by the Commission in resolution 6 (XXV). The Council, in resolution 1776 (LIV) of 18 May 1973, authorized the establishment of the Subcommission.

97. The functions of the Subcommission are to coordinate regional activities directed against illicit drug traffic and to formulate recommendations to the Commission.

98. The subcommission has 23 members, as follows: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Egypt, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Yemen. States from outside the region may attend as observers. Relevant intergovernmental organizations as well as United Nations bodies may be invited. The Subcommission reports directly to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and meets annually for a period of five days.

(ii) Meetings of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies

99. The purpose of the meetings of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies is to coordinate activities directed against illicit drug traffic within the respective regions. Having been granted the status of subsidiary bodies of the Commission, the reports and recommendations of the meetings are submitted to the Commission.

a. Asia and the Pacific

100. Membership is open to any State or territory that is a member or associate member of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Other States outside the region may be invited by the Secretary-General to send observers at their own expense. The meeting takes place annually. (Council resolutions 1845 (LVI) of 15 May 1974 and 1988/15 of 25 May 1988.)

b. Africa

101. Membership is open to any State that is a member of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Other States outside the region may be invited by the Secretary-General to send observers at their own expense. The meeting takes place annually. (Council resolutions 1985/11 of 28 May 1985 and 1988/15.)

c. Latin America and the Caribbean region

102. Membership is open to any State or territory that is a member or associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Other States outside the region may be invited by the Secretary-General to send observers at their own expense. The meeting takes place annually. (Council resolutions 1987/34 of 26 May 1897 and 1988/15.)

d. Europe

103. Membership is open to any State that is a member of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). Other States outside the region may be invited by the Secretary-General to send observers at their own expense. In accordance with Council resolution 2005/28 of 22 July 2005, the meeting takes place once every two years in odd-numbered years. (Council resolutions 1990/30 of 24 May 1990, 1993/36 of 27 July 1993 and 2005/28 of 22 July 2005.)

6. Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

Terms of reference

104. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was established as a functional commission of the Council in Council resolution 1992/1 of 6 February 1992 to replace the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control.

105. Under its terms of reference (see General Assembly resolution 46/152 of 18 December 1991, annex), the Commission has the following functions:

(a) To provide policy guidance to the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice;

(b) To develop, monitor and review the implementation of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme on the basis of a system of medium-term planning in accordance with the following priority principles: (i) empirical evidence, including research findings and other information on the nature and extent of crime and on trends in crime; (ii) the social, financial and other costs of various forms of crimes and/or crime control to the individual, the local, national and international community, and to the development process; (iii) the need of developing or developed countries which are confronting specific difficulties related to national or international circumstances to have recourse to experts and other resources necessary for establishing and developing programmes for crime prevention and criminal justice that are appropriate at the national and local levels; (iv) the need for a balance within the programme of work between programme development and practical action; (v) the protection of human rights in the administration of justice and the prevention and control of crime; (vi) the assessment of areas in which concerted action at the international level and within the framework of the programme would be most effective; and (vii) avoidance of overlapping with the activities of other entities of the United Nations system or of other organizations;

(c) To facilitate and help to coordinate the activities of the United Nations institutes for the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders;

(d) To mobilize the support of Member States for the programme;

(e) To prepare for the United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders and to consider suggestions regarding possible subjects for the programme of work as submitted by the congresses.

Membership and composition

106. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/152 of 18 December 1991, the Commission has 40 members. Its seats are distributed as follows:

(a) Twelve for African States;

(b) Nine for Asian States;

(c) Four for Eastern European States;

(d) Eight for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Seven for Western European and other States.

Term of office

107. In paragraph 24 of the annex to its resolution 46/152, the General Assembly decided that the term of office of members should be three years.

Reporting procedure

108. The Commission reports directly to the Council. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*. The reports of the quinquennial United Nations congresses on the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders are issued as documents of the General Assembly. (See Assembly resolution 56/119 of 19 December 2001, on the role, function, periodicity and duration of the congresses.)

Frequency of meetings

109. In accordance with paragraph (b) of Council decision 1993/242 of 27 July 1993, the Commission meets annually for a period of eight days. However, the Commission may decide, at an intersessional meeting, to shorten the duration. In its resolution 16/3 of 27 April 2007, the Commission decided to hold a reconvened session in odd-numbered years to consider the budget of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund.

Multi-year programme of work

110. In section I of its resolution 6/1 of 9 May 1997, the Commission decided to establish a multi-year workplan, with each session of the Commission being devoted to a specific major theme. In its resolution 9/1 of 20 April 2000, the Commission decided to continue to follow its established multi-year programme of work, according to which each session of the Commission would have one prominent theme.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

111. In accordance with Council resolution 2003/31 of 22 July 2003, the Commission, at the end of each session, elects its Bureau for the subsequent session. Its members hold office for one year. To ensure continuity, the Commission has adopted the practice of electing at least one of the retiring officers of the previous Bureau to serve on the incoming Bureau.

112. There is no special arrangement for a senior Vice-Chairperson to become Chairperson at the following session. The members of the Bureau rotate in accordance with Commission decision 1/101 of 29 April 1992.

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

113. By informal agreement, action is taken by consensus. Thus far, action has been taken through resolutions and decisions.

Utilization of informal consultations

114. Most draft resolutions are discussed and agreed upon during informal consultations. This is accomplished through the establishment of parallel sessions of

open-ended working groups or committees of the whole, chaired by one of the Vice-Chairpersons.

Role of the Secretariat

115. The Secretariat plays an active role by assisting the Commission in identifying options available to the Commission and advising it on viable solutions. Reports prepared by the Centre for International Crime Prevention contain concrete proposals for action.

Inclusion of a general debate in the work programme

116. The Commission does not hold a general debate, but a thematic discussion on a priority issue identified at its previous sessions.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

117. The Commission has held panel discussions at past sessions, though it is not the general rule. The Commission holds open-ended intersessional meetings on a regular basis. The Bureau of the Commission reports annually to the Commission on its intersessional work, as called for by its resolution 6/1.

7. Commission on Science and Technology for Development

Terms of reference

118. In its decision 1992/218 of 30 April 1992, the Council established the Commission on Science and Technology for Development as a functional commission and as the successor to the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development and its subsidiary body, the Advisory Committee on Science and Technology for Development. The Intergovernmental Committee had been established in General Assembly resolution 34/218 of 19 December 1979, by which the Assembly endorsed the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development.[11] Council decision 1992/218 was adopted pursuant to Assembly resolution 46/235 of 13 April 1992 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. The mandate of the Commission was reaffirmed by the Council in its resolution 1992/62 of 31 July 1992.

119. The consolidated mandate of the Commission is derived from General Assembly resolutions 34/218, 41/183 of 8 December 1986, 44/14 A to E of 26 October 1989 and 46/235, as well as from the annex to resolution 7 (II) of 4 June 1980 of the Intergovernmental Committee, and specifies the following functions:

(a) Promoting and catalysing international cooperation in the field of science and technology for development, in particular in developing countries, and in helping solve global scientific and technological problems;

(b) Formulating policy guidelines for the harmonization of policies of the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in regard to scientific and technological activities, on the basis of the Vienna Programme of Action;

[11] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, Vienna, 20-31 August 1979* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.I.21 and corrigenda), chap. VII.

(c) Promoting the improvement of linkages between the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, with a view to ensuring the coordinated implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action;

(d) Identifying priorities for activities within the Vienna Programme of Action with a view to facilitating operational planning at the national, subregional, regional, interregional and international levels;

(e) Monitoring the activities and programmes related to science and technology within the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system;

(f) Promoting the optimum mobilization of resources in order to enable the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to carry out the activities of the Vienna Programme of Action;

(g) Providing directives and policy-making guidance to the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development;

(h) The early identification and assessment of new scientific and technological developments that may adversely affect the development process as well as those that may have specific and potential importance for that process and for strengthening the scientific and technological capacities of the developing countries;

(i) Choosing subjects of particular significance with major science and technology dimensions with a view to providing an assessment of technology and related policy analysis in order to facilitate the debate of the question in the Assembly;

(j) Providing, at the request of the Council, such scientific and technical expert advice as may be necessary for the discharge of the mandate of the Council;

(k) Providing also, through the Council, expert advice to other intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations system.

120. In its resolution 2006/46 of 28 July 2006, the Council, recalling the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action, adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society at its first phase, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003[12] and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 59/220 of 22 December 2004, and the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, adopted by the Summit at its second phase, held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005,[13] and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 60/252 of 27 March 2006, expanded the mandate of the Commission to include follow-up to the Summit. In paragraph 4 of the same resolution, the Council decided that, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 and 60/252, the Commission should effectively assist the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up, in particular the review and assessment of progress made in implementing the outcomes of the Summit, while at the same time, maintaining its original mandate on science and technology for development, also

[12] See A/C.2/59/3, annex, chap. I.

[13] See A/60/687.

taking into account the provisions of paragraph 60 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome.[14]

121. The Council also decided, in paragraph 6 of the same resolution, that, in the exercise of the above-mentioned responsibility, the Commission should review and assess progress made in implementing the outcomes of the Summit and advise the Council thereon, including through the elaboration of recommendations to the Council aimed at furthering the implementation of the Summit outcomes and, that to that end, the Commission should:

(a) Review and assess progress at the international and regional levels in the implementation of action lines, recommendations and commitments contained in the outcome documents of the Summit;

(b) Share best and effective practices and lessons learned and identify obstacles and constraints encountered, actions and initiatives to overcome them and important measures for further implementation of the Summit outcomes;

(c) Promote dialogue and foster partnerships, in coordination with other appropriate United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, to contribute to the attainment of the Summit objectives and the implementation of its outcomes and to use information and communication technologies for development and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, with the participation of Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations and other international organizations in accordance with their different roles and responsibilities.

Membership and composition

122. In accordance with Council decision 2006/267 of 15 December 2006, the Commission has 43 members, with the following geographical distribution:

(a) Eleven members from African States;

(b) Nine members from Asian States;

(c) Eight members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(d) Five members from Eastern European States;

(e) Ten members from Western European and other States.

Term of office

123. The term of office of members is four years (General Assembly resolution 46/235, annex, para. 7 (a) (ii)).

Reporting procedure

124. As a functional commission, the Commission reports directly to the Council. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

[14] General Assembly resolution 60/1.

Timing of meetings

125. The Commission meets annually for a period of one week (Council resolution 2002/37 of 26 July 2002 and decision 2003/291 of 24 July 2003).

Multi-year programme of work

126. In its decision 2005/308 of 27 July 2005, on the methods of work of the Commission, the Council decided that the Commission, in order to fulfil its mandate, would adopt a biennial programme of work beginning at its ninth session, in the first year focusing on policy analyses and in the second year focusing on operational aspects and implementation, and that the Commission should strengthen the connection between its review of implementation and its policy recommendations. In addition, the Commission selects a substantive theme for its intersessional period.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

127. At the end of each session, the Commission elects its Bureau for the following session. The Bureau retains its functions during the intersessional period.

128. There is no special arrangement for a senior Vice-Chairperson to become Chairperson at the following session. The rotation of members of the Bureau is based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

129. There has been an informal understanding among members of the Commission that decisions should be made by consensus. The Commission normally takes action on draft proposals without a vote.

130. The Commission takes action on draft resolutions and decisions. It does not take action on the basis of Chairperson's summaries or agreed conclusions. Chairperson's summaries have, however, been included in the report of the Commission.

Utilization of informal consultations

131. Informal consultations are held on all draft proposals and the draft report.

Role of the Secretariat

132. The Secretariat traditionally assists the members of the Commission in the drafting of texts, at the request of delegations, not only with regard to substantive issues but also to facilitate the application of United Nations editorial practice.

Inclusion of a general debate in the work programme

133. A general discussion is held on each agenda item.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

134. At its second session, the Commission decided that it would carry out its work programme at future sessions, inter alia, through panels, experts or working groups.

Participation of non-governmental organizations, civil society entities and business sector entities, including the private sector, in the work of the Commission

135. For the modalities of participation of such organizations and entities, see Council decisions 2007/215 and 2007/216 of 26 April 2007.

8. Commission on Sustainable Development

Terms of reference

136. The Commission on Sustainable Development was established as a functional commission of the Council in Council decision 1993/207 of 12 February 1993, pursuant to a request of the General Assembly in paragraph 2 of its resolution 47/191 of 22 December 1992. According to paragraph 2 of that resolution, the purpose of the Commission is to ensure effective follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, as well as to enhance international cooperation and rationalize the intergovernmental decision-making capacity for the integration of environment and development issues and to examine the progress of the implementation of Agenda 21[15] at the national, regional and international levels in order to achieve sustainable development in all countries.

137. The terms of reference of the Commission are contained in paragraphs 3 to 5 of Assembly resolution 47/191, and include the following functions:

(a) To monitor progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and activities related to the integration of environmental and developmental goals throughout the United Nations system through analysis and reports from all relevant organs, organizations, programmes and institutions of the United Nations system dealing with various issues of environment and development, including those related to finance;

(b) To consider information provided by Governments, for example, in the form of periodic communications or national reports regarding the activities they undertake to implement Agenda 21, the problems they face, such as problems related to financial resources and technology transfer, and other environment and development issues they find relevant;

(c) To review the progress in the implementation of the commitments set forth in Agenda 21, including those related to the provision of financial resources and transfer of technology;

(d) To review and monitor regularly progress towards the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries for official development assistance;

(e) To review on a regular basis the adequacy of funding and mechanisms, including efforts to reach the objectives agreed in chapter 33 of Agenda 21, including targets where applicable;

(f) To receive and analyse relevant input from competent non-governmental organizations, including the scientific and the private sector, in the context of the overall implementation of Agenda 21;

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[15] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

(g) To enhance the dialogue, within the framework of the United Nations, with non-governmental organizations and the independent sector, as well as other entities outside the United Nations system;

(h) To consider, where appropriate, information regarding the progress made in the implementation of environmental conventions, which could be made available by the relevant conferences of parties;

(i) To consider, at an appropriate time, the results of the review to be conducted expeditiously by the Secretary-General of all recommendations of the Conference for capacity-building programmes, information networks, task forces and other mechanisms to support the integration of environment and development at regional and subregional levels;

(j) To monitor progress in promoting, facilitating and financing, as appropriate, access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, in particular to developing countries, on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights as well as the special needs of developing countries for the implementation of Agenda 21.

138. The Commission also has the primary responsibility for follow-up to the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21[16] and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[17] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[18] adopted at the World Summit, held in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002.

139. In its decision 2002/303 of 25 October 2002, the Council decided to terminate the work of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for Development (see E/2001/INF/3, paras. 343-350) and to transfer its work to the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Membership and composition

140. In accordance with Council decision 1993/207, the Commission on Sustainable Development consists of one representative from each of 53 members elected by the Council from among the States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies on the basis of an equitable geographical distribution, according to the following pattern:

(a) Thirteen members from African States;

(b) Eleven members from Asian States;

(c) Six members from Eastern European States;

(d) Ten members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Thirteen members from Western European and other States.

[16] General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

[17] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[18] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

Term of office

141. The term of office of members is three years (Council decision 1993/207, para. (b)).

Reporting procedure

142. The Commission reports directly to the Council and its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*. In accordance with para. 3 (i) of General Assembly resolution 47/191, the Commission provides appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly, through the Council, on the basis of an integrated consideration of the reports and issues related to the implementation of Agenda 21.

Frequency of meetings

143. The Commission meets annually for a period of two to three weeks (General Assembly resolution 47/191, para. 9).

Multi-year programme of work

144. Since its establishment in 1993, the Commission has worked on the basis of multi-year programmes of work.

145. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 2003/61 of 25 July 2003, the Council decided that, in order to fulfil its mandate, the work of the Commission would be organized in a series of two-year action-oriented implementation cycles, which would include a review session and a policy session, and that the cycles would function as follows:

(a) The review sessions of the Commission, to be held in April/May for a period of two to three weeks in the first year of the cycle, would undertake an evaluation of progress made in implementing Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, while focusing on identifying constraints and obstacles in the process of implementation with regard to the selected thematic cluster of issues for the cycle;

(b) The review sessions would include a high-level segment, an exchange of regional experiences, dialogues with experts, including scientific experts, and sharing of best practices and lessons learned, with a view to facilitating implementation, as well as capacity-building activities, such as learning centres and partnership fairs;

(c) The review sessions would undertake the above-mentioned evaluation on the basis of:

(i) The Secretary-General's state of implementation reports;

(ii) The contributions of United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, the Global Environment Facility and international financial and trade institutions;

(iii) The outcomes of regional and subregional meetings and activities, as appropriate;

(iv) The contributions of major groups, including scientific experts, as well as educators, taking into account paragraphs 139 (g) and 149 (c) and (d) of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, on their results-oriented activities concerning the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

(d) The review session evaluation should enable an improved understanding of priority concerns in the implementation of the selected thematic cluster of issues and facilitate an effective policy discussion in the course of the policy year with a view to strengthening implementation in those areas;

(e) The outcome of the review session would be a report, including a chairperson's summary, identifying constraints and obstacles and possible approaches and best practices for the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

(f) In the policy year, the Commission would convene an intergovernmental preparatory meeting for one week in New York in February/March to discuss policy options and possible actions to address the constraints and obstacles in the process of implementation identified during the review year;

(g) The discussions of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting would be based on the outcome of the review session, reports by the Secretary-General as well as other relevant inputs. Based on those discussions, the Chair would prepare a draft negotiating document for consideration at the policy session;

(h) The policy sessions, to be held in April/May of the second year of the cycle, would take policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation in the selected thematic cluster of issues, taking account of the discussions of the intergovernmental preparatory meeting, the reports of the Secretary-General and other relevant inputs;

(i) The review sessions and the policy sessions should mobilize further action by all implementation actors to overcome obstacles and constraints in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and should address new challenges and opportunities and share lessons learned and best practices;

(j) Specific organizational modalities for Commission meetings would be recommended by the Bureau of the Commission through open-ended and transparent consultations conducted in a timely manner, following the established United Nations rules of procedure. Activities during Commission meetings should provide for balance involvement of participants from all regions, as well as for gender balance.

146. The annex to the above-mentioned resolution lays out the multi-year programme of work of the Commission.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

147. Immediately after the conclusion of a session, the Commission elects the Bureau for its subsequent session. The general principle of geographical rotation is observed. There is no senior Vice-Chairperson. The newly elected Bureau is

encouraged to play an active role in the preparations of the next regular session, as well as of informal intersessional meetings of the Commission.

Modalities for taking action

148. The Commission has agreed informally that it will take action by consensus. Reports of the Commission have contained resolutions and decisions. There is also a Chairperson's summary, as appropriate.

Utilization of informal consultations

149. The Commission conducts its work utilizing the format of a plenary meeting. The Commission holds informal consultations as required.

Role of the Secretariat

150. According to the established practice of the Commission, following discussion of the reports of the Secretary-General, the Secretariat prepares, under each agenda item, a negotiating paper reflecting the views and comments expressed by delegations. Further rounds of negotiations take place on these papers, which ultimately are incorporated in the report as decisions of the Commission.

Inclusion of a general debate in the work programme

151. There is a short general debate at the beginning of the regular sessions of the Commission.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

152. The Commission organizes panel discussions for several agenda items and these are followed by a question-and-answer session with the panel. Participants in the panels include guests from the private sector, ministers or former ministers and representatives of United Nations organizations. The Commission normally holds a high-level segment, which includes a panel discussion with ministerial participation. Eminent persons from within and outside the United Nations system take part in the panels.

Subsidiary bodies of the Commission on Sustainable Development

153. The Commission establishes intersessional ad hoc open-ended working groups, as required, to address specific issues within its work programme.

9. United Nations Forum on Forests

Terms of reference

154. The United Nations Forum on Forests was established as a subsidiary body of the Council by Council resolution 2000/35 of 18 October 2000. The main objective of this international arrangement on forests is to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end. The purpose of such an international arrangement would be to promote the implementation of internationally agreed actions on forests, at the national, regional and global levels. The resolution also sets out the principal functions of the Forum, as follows:

(a) Facilitate and promote the implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action as well as other actions which may be agreed upon, including through national forest programmes and other integrated programmes relevant to forests; catalyse, mobilize and generate financial resources; and mobilize and channel technical and scientific resources to this end, including by taking steps towards the broadening and development of mechanisms and/or further initiatives to enhance international cooperation;

(b) Provide a forum for continued policy development and dialogue among Governments, which would involve international organizations and other interested parties, including major groups, as identified in Agenda 21, to foster a common understanding on sustainable forest management and to address forest issues and emerging areas of priority concern in a holistic, comprehensive and integrated manner;

(c) Enhance cooperation as well as policy and programme coordination on forest-related issues among relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, as well as contribute to synergies among them, including coordination among donors;

(d) Foster international cooperation, including North-South and public-private partnerships, as well as cross-sectoral cooperation at the national, regional and global levels;

(e) Monitor and assess progress at the national, regional and global levels through reporting by Governments, as well as by regional and international organizations, institutions and instruments, and on this basis consider future actions needed;

(f) Strengthen political commitment to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests through ministerial engagement; develop ways to liaise with the governing bodies of international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments; and promote action-oriented dialogue and policy formulation related to forests.

155. By the same resolution, the Council decided that, in order to carry out the functions outlined above, the Forum would (a) consider, within five years, on the basis of the assessment referred to in paragraph (e) of its terms of reference, the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests, with a view to recommending it to the Council and, through it, to the Assembly,[19] and (b) take steps to devise approaches towards appropriate financial and technology transfer support to enable the implementation of sustainable forest management.

156. In its resolution 2006/49 of 28 July 2006, the Council, re-emphasizing the importance of the Forum as an intergovernmental body on forests within the United Nations and the continued supporting role of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, and the need for the Forum to continue to provide the Partnership with clear guidance, agreed that the international arrangement on forests would perform the following additional principal functions:

[19] See Economic and Social Council resolution 2007/40 and General Assembly resolution 62/98.

(a) Enhance the contribution of forests to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and to the implementation of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development;

(b) Encourage and assist countries, including those with low forest cover, to develop and implement forest conservation and rehabilitation strategies, increase the area of forests under sustainable management and reduce forest degradation and the loss of forest cover in order to maintain and improve their forest resources with a view to enhancing the benefits of forests to meet present and future needs, in particular the needs of indigenous peoples and local communities whose livelihoods depend on forests;

(c) Strengthen interaction between the United Nations Forum on Forests and relevant regional and subregional forest-related mechanisms, institutions and instruments, organizations and processes, with participation of major groups, as identified in Agenda 21 and relevant stakeholders to facilitate enhanced cooperation and effective implementation of sustainable forest management, as well as to contribute to the work of the Forum.

157. In paragraph 3 of the same resolution, the Council decided to set the following shared global objectives on forests and agreed to work globally and nationally to achieve progress towards their achievement by 2015:

Global objective 1

Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation;

Global objective 2

Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people;

Global objective 3

Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests;

Global objective 4

Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

Membership

158. The Forum is composed of all States Members of the United Nations and States members of the specialized agencies, with full and equal participation,

including voting rights. It is open to all States and operates in a transparent and participatory manner. Relevant international and regional organizations, including regional economic integration organizations, institutions and instruments, as well as the major groups identified in Agenda 21, are also involved.

159. The Forum operates under the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council. The supplementary procedural arrangements established by the Council for the Commission on Sustainable Development in its decisions 1993/215 of 12 February 1993 and 1995/201 of 8 February 1995 also apply to the Forum. Travel expenses for one representative of each State member of the Forum which is also a member of the Commission on Sustainable Development, met from the regular budget of the United Nations.[20]

160. Paragraph 4 of Council resolution 2000/35 and paragraphs 10 to 18 of its resolution 2006/49 set out the other working modalities for the Forum.

Reporting procedure

161. The Forum reports to the Council and, through it, to the General Assembly. The reports on its sessions are also made available to relevant United Nations bodies and other international forest-related organizations, instruments and intergovernmental processes to strengthen synergies and coordination in policy development and the implementation of forest-related activities. The Forum maintains close links with the Commission on Sustainable Development, including through the convening of joint meetings of the Bureaux.

Frequency of meetings

162. The Forum meets biennially for a period of up to two weeks (Council resolution 2006/49, para. 10). The Forum may convene a high-level ministerial segment of two to three days' duration, as required. The high-level segment could include a one-day policy dialogue with the heads of organizations participating in the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, as well as with other forest-related international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments. It is expected that high-level ministerial segments will be held in 2011 and 2015.

Multi-year programme of work

163. The Forum works on the basis of a multi-year programme of work, drawing on the elements reflected in the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles),[21] chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/ Intergovernmental Forum on Forests. In its resolution 7/1, adopted on 27 April 2007, the Forum adopted a multi-year programme of work for the period 2007-2015.

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[20] In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1798 (XVII), 2128 (XX) and 2245 (XXI), the travel but not subsistence expenses of one representative of each State member of a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, except when the representative's normal duty station is at the place of the meeting, is paid from the regular budget of the United Nations.

[21] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex III.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

164. The Bureau of the Forum consists of one Chairperson and four Vice-Chairpersons, one of whom also acts as Rapporteur, elected in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. Immediately following the closure of a session, the Forum holds the first meeting of its subsequent session for the sole purpose of electing the new Chairperson and other members of the Bureau. In accordance with Council decision 2007/273 of 4 October 2007, the members of the Bureau hold office for a term of two years.

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

165. There is no formal or informal agreement that action should be taken by consensus. The Forum takes action through decisions and resolutions.

Utilization of informal consultations

166. The Forum normally holds informal consultations on all texts under consideration.

Role of the Secretariat

167. The Secretariat plays an active role in promoting action by the Forum and assists in the drafting of texts for action.

Ad hoc expert group meetings

168. Pursuant to Council resolutions 2000/35 and 2006/49, the Forum may convene ad hoc expert group meetings during its intersessional period. (See Forum resolution 7/1 for other intersessional modalities.)

B. Regional commissions

1. Economic Commission for Africa

Terms of reference

169. The Economic Commission for Africa was established by the Council in its resolution 671 A (XXV) of 29 April 1958, which set forth the following terms of reference:

> The Economic Commission for Africa, acting within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the Economic and Social Council, shall, provided that the Commission takes no action with respect to any country without the agreement of the Government of that country:
>
> (a) Initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic development of Africa, including its social aspects, with a view to raising the level of economic activity and levels of living in Africa, and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of countries and territories of Africa, both among themselves and with other countries of the world;

(b) Make or sponsor such investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and developments within the territories of Africa as the Commission deems appropriate, and disseminate the results of such investigation and studies;

(c) Undertake or sponsor the collection, evaluation and dissemination of such economic, technological and statistical information as the Commission deems appropriate;

(d) Perform, within the available resources of its secretariat, such advisory services as the countries and territories of the region may desire, provided that such services do not overlap with those rendered by other bodies of the United Nations or by the specialized agencies;

(e) Assist the Council at its request in discharging its functions within the region in connection with any economic problems, including problems in the field of technical assistance;

(f) Assist in the formulation and development of coordinated policies as a basis for practical action in promoting economic and technological development in the region;

(g) In carrying out the above functions, deal as appropriate with the social aspects of economic development and the interrelationship of economic and social factors.

Membership and composition

170. In accordance with section III of Council resolution 974 D (XXXVI) of 30 July 1965, which amended the terms of reference of the Commission in regard to its membership, membership of the Commission is open to Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Comoros, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, the Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe and to any State in the area that may become a Member of the United Nations.

171. Switzerland participates in a consultative capacity in the work of the Commission by virtue of Council resolution 925 (XXXIV) of 6 July 1962.

172. The Commission has at present the above-mentioned 53 members.

Organs dealing with overall development issues and subsidiary bodies

173. The Council, in paragraph 3 of resolution 671 A (XXV) of 29 April 1958, decided that the Commission might, after discussion with any specialized agency functioning in the same general field, and with the approval of the Council, establish such subsidiary bodies as it deemed appropriate, for facilitating the carrying out of its responsibilities. The Council, by resolution 1997/5 of 18 July 1997, approved a new structure for the Commission and, by resolution 2007/4 of 23 July 2007, endorsed the proposed intergovernmental machinery.

174. The Commission has at present the following organs dealing with overall development issues:

(a) Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (the Commission) and its Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole;

(b) Ministerial Follow-up Committee of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development;

(c) Ministerial conferences of the five subregional development centres: one for North Africa with headquarters in Tangiers, Morocco; one for West Africa with headquarters in Niamey; one for Central Africa with headquarters in Yaoundé; one for Southern Africa with headquarters in Lusaka; and one for Eastern Africa with headquarters in Kigali.

In addition, a joint annual African Union/Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is organized.

175. The Commission has at present the following seven sectoral committees:

(a) Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development;

(b) Committee on Governance and Popular Participation;

(c) Committee on Development Information, Science and Technology;

(d) Committee on Trade, Regional Cooperation and Integration;

(e) Committee on Women and Development;

(f) Committee on Statistics;

(g) Committee on Human and Social Development.

Reporting procedure

176. The Commission reports directly to the Council (Council resolution 671 A (XXV), para. 18), and its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*. In addition, matters calling for action by the Council or brought to its attention are included in the annual report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation.

Frequency of meetings

177. The Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (the Commission) and its Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole meet on a biennial basis; the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development also meets biennially, in alternate years to the Commission; all other committees meet on a biennial basis.

2. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Terms of reference

178. The Commission was provisionally established by the Council in its resolution 37 (IV) of 28 March 1947 as the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East. The Council, in resolution 414 (XIII), section C.I, of 18, 19 and 20 September 1951, decided to continue the Commission indefinitely, and, by resolution 1895 (LVII) of 1 August 1974, decided to change the name to "Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific".

179. The terms of reference of the Commission as set out in Council resolution 37 (IV), which have been amended by the Council at subsequent sessions, most recently in Council decision 1994/288 of 26 July 1994 and Council resolutions 1995/22 of 24 July 1995, 1996/3 A to C of 18 July 1996, 2002/2 of 19 July 2002, 2003/7 of 18 July 2003 and 2005/35 of 26 July 2005, and revised in consequence of various General Assembly resolutions on the admission of new members, are as follows:

> The Commission, acting within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the Council shall, provided the Commission takes no action in respect of any country without the agreement of the Government of that country:
>
> (a) Initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic reconstruction and development of Asia and the Pacific, for raising the level of economic activity in Asia and the Pacific and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of these areas both among themselves and with other countries of the world;
>
> (b) Make or sponsor such investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and developments within territories of Asia and the Pacific as the Commission deems appropriate;
>
> (c) Undertake or sponsor the collection, evaluation and dissemination of such economic, technological and statistical information as the Commission deems appropriate;
>
> (d) Perform such advisory services, within the available resources of its secretariat, as the countries of the region may desire, provided that such services do not overlap with those rendered by the specialized agencies or the relevant United Nations bodies;
>
> (e) Assist the Council, at its request, in discharging its functions within the region in connection with any economic problems, including problems in the field of technical assistance;
>
> (f) In carrying out the above functions, deal, as appropriate, with the social aspects of economic development and the interrelationship of the economic and social factors.

Membership and composition

180. The Commission has at present 53 members, of which 4 are not within its geographical scope, and 9 associate members. The members are: Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam,

Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, France, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu and Viet Nam. Any State in the area that may hereafter become a Member of the United Nations shall be thereupon admitted as a member of the Commission. The associate members are American Samoa; Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; Cook Islands; French Polynesia; Guam; Hong Kong, China; Macau, China; New Caledonia; and Niue. Switzerland participates in a consultative capacity in the work of the Commission by virtue of Council resolution 860 (XXXII) of 21 December 1961.

Subsidiary bodies

181. The Council, in resolution 69 (V) of 31 July 1947, decided that the Commission might, after discussion with any specialized agency functioning in the same general field, and with the approval of the Council, establish such subsidiary bodies as it deemed appropriate for facilitating the carrying out of its responsibilities.

182. The Council, in its resolution 1997/4 of 18 July 1997 on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission, established the following special bodies:

(a) Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, which meets on a regular basis to advise and exchange views with the Executive Secretary on the Commission's work;

(b) Committee on Regional Economic Cooperation, which meets biennially, and its Steering Group, which meets annually.

183. In section II of its resolution 2002/2, the Council decided that:

> The subsidiary structure of the Commission shall consist of the two existing special bodies and the following three thematic committees and their respective subcommittees:
>
> (a) Committee on Poverty Reduction;
>
> (b) Committee on Managing Globalization;
>
> (c) Committee on Emerging Social Issues.
>
> The three thematic committees shall meet biennially for a maximum duration of three days for each session.
>
> Under the Committee on Poverty Reduction, the following two subcommittees shall be established:
>
> (a) Subcommittee on Poverty Reduction Practices;
>
> (b) Subcommittee on Statistics.

Under the Committee on Managing Globalization, the following four subcommittees shall be established:

(a) Subcommittee on International Trade and Investment;

(b) Subcommittee on Transport Infrastructure and Facilitation and Tourism;

(c) Subcommittee on Environment and Sustainable Development;

(d) Subcommittee on Information, Communications and Space Technology.

Under the Committee on Emerging Social Issues, the following two subcommittees shall be established:

(a) Subcommittee on Socially Vulnerable Groups;

(b) Subcommittee on Health and Development.

The subcommittees shall meet biennially for a maximum duration of three days for each session. Should the Committee on Poverty Reduction so decide, the Subcommittee on Statistics shall meet annually for a maximum duration of three days for each session.

184. The Council also decided that the two following bodies should be retained:

(a) Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries, which meets biennially for a maximum of two days back-to-back with the annual sessions of the Commission in odd-numbered years;

(b) Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries, which meets biennially for a maximum of two days back-to-back with the sessions of the Commission in even-numbered years.

185. The terms of reference of all of the bodies mentioned above are contained in the annexes to Council resolution 2002/2.

186. Following a midterm review of the functioning of the conference structure of the Commission, the Council, in paragraph 4 (a) of its resolution 2005/35, decided that:

The thematic committees shall be retained to keep the work of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific focused on three key thematic areas: poverty reduction; managing globalization; and addressing emerging social issues. The work of the subcommittees shall be subsumed under the respective thematic committees beginning in 2006, as a means of strengthening their integration within their respective thematic contexts;

To ensure that the key sectoral issues formerly dealt with by the subcommittees can be addressed more effectively within a thematic framework, the format of the sessions of the thematic committees shall include segments as follows:

(i) Committee on Poverty Reduction; Poverty reduction practices and statistics;

(ii) Committee on Managing Globalization:

Part I: International trade and investment, and transport infrastructure and facilitation and tourism;

Part II: Information, communication and space technology, and environment and sustainable development;

(iii) Committee on Emerging Social Issues: socially vulnerable groups, and health and development;

To ensure timely review of emerging issues as well as reporting to the Commission, the thematic committees, including parts I and II of the Committee on Managing Globalization, shall meet separately and annually after the session of the Commission for a maximum duration of five days for each session, with the duration depending on the agenda of the committee in question.

Reporting procedure

187. The Commission reports directly to the Council (Council resolution 37 (IV)). Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*. In addition, matters calling for action by the Council or brought to its attention are included in the annual report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation.

Frequency of meetings

188. In accordance with Council resolution 2002/2, the Commission meets annually, with each session comprising a senior officials' segment followed by a ministerial segment, for a maximum of seven working days.

3. Economic Commission for Europe

Terms of reference

189. The Economic Commission for Europe was established by the Council in its resolution 36 (IV) of 28 March 1947. The current terms of reference and rules of procedure of the Commission were endorsed by the Council in its resolution 2006/38 of 27 July 2006 and are contained in annex II to that resolution. In accordance with the terms of reference, the Commission:

(a) Acting within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the Economic and Social Council shall, provided that the Commission takes no action in respect of any country without the agreement of the Government of that country:

(i) Initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic development and integration of Europe, for raising the level of European economic activity, and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of the European countries both among themselves and with other countries of the world;

(ii) Make or sponsor such investigations and studies of economic and technological problems of and developments within member countries of the Commission and within Europe generally as the Commission deems appropriate;

(iii) Undertake or sponsor the collection, evaluation and dissemination of such economic, technological and statistical information as the Commission deems appropriate;

(b) Is empowered to make recommendations on any matter within its competence directly to its member Governments, Governments admitted in a consultative capacity, and the specialized agencies concerned. The Commission shall submit for the prior consideration of the Council any of its proposals for activities that would have important effects on the economy of the world as a whole;

(c) May, after discussion with any specialized agency functioning in the same general field and with the approval of the Council, establish such subsidiary bodies as it deems appropriate for facilitating the carrying out of its responsibilities.

190. At its meeting on 2 December 2005, the Commission adopted the workplan on its reform, which was endorsed by the Council in its resolution 2006/38 and is contained in annex I to that resolution. The workplan includes the following mission statement:

> The Economic Commission for Europe as a multilateral platform facilitates greater economic integration and cooperation among its ... member States and promotes sustainable development and economic prosperity through:
>
> (a) Policy dialogue;
>
> (b) Negotiation of international legal instruments;
>
> (c) Development of regulations and norms;
>
> (d) Exchange and application of best practices as well as economic and technical expertise;
>
> (e) Technical cooperation for countries with economies in transition.
>
> The Economic Commission for Europe contributes to enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations through the regional implementation of outcomes of global United Nations conferences and summits.

191. Section II of the workplan, entitled "Governance structure", sets out the following responsibilities and methods of work for the Executive Committee, as follows:

(a) Implementation of the overall guidance set by the Commission;

(b) Representatives of all States members of the Commission participate in the Executive Committee;

(c) The Chairs of the sectoral committees — or the Vice-Chairs — are regularly invited to the meetings of the Executive Committee;

(d) The Executive Secretary or his representative takes part in the meetings of the Executive Committee;

(e) The Executive Committee is presided over by a representative of the country that chairs the Commission. The Chairman of the Executive Committee is assisted by two Vice-Chairs elected by the Executive Committee, for a period of one year, the term being renewable;

(f) In the period between the biennial sessions of the Commission, the Executive Committee acts on behalf of the Commission and can seize itself of all matters related to Commission activities in conformity with the terms of reference.

Membership and composition

192. The Commission has at present the following 56 members: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uzbekistan. The Holy See participates in the work of the Commission in accordance with Commission decision N (XXXI) of 5 April 1976.

Subsidiary bodies

193. The Council, in paragraph 5 of section A of its resolution 36 (IV), decided that the Commission might, after discussion with any specialized agency functioning in the same general field and with the approval of the Council, establish such subsidiary bodies as it deemed appropriate for facilitating the carrying out of its responsibilities.

194. The workplan (see Council resolution 2006/38, annex I) established the following eight sectoral committees, which meet on an annual basis:

(a) Committee on Environmental Policy;

(b) Committee on Inland Transport;

(c) Committee on Statistics, further referred to as the Conference of European Statisticians;

(d) Committee on Sustainable Energy;

(e) Committee on Trade;

(f) Committee on Timber;

(g) Committee on Housing and Land Management;

(h) Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration.

Reporting procedure

195. The Commission reports directly to the Council (Council resolution 36 (IV), para. 6), and its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*. In addition, matters calling for action by the Council or brought to its attention are included in the annual report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation.

Frequency of meetings

196. In accordance with Council resolution 2006/38, the Commission meets biennially.

4. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Terms of reference

197. The Economic Commission for Latin America was established by the Council in its resolution 106 (VI) of 25 February and 5 March 1948. In its resolution 1984/67 of 27 July 1984, the Council decided to change the name of the Commission to the present one. The following terms of reference were set out in Council resolutions 106 (VI), 234 (IX) of 12 August 1949, 414 (XIII), section C.I, of 18, 19 and 20 September 1951, and 723 C (XXVIII) of 17 July 1959, and the Council's decision of 31 July 1969 adopted at its forty-seventh session:

> The Commission, acting within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the Council, shall, provided that the Commission takes no action with respect to any country without the agreement of the Government of that country:
>
> (a) Initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for dealing with urgent economic problems and for raising the level of economic activity in Latin America and the Caribbean and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of the Latin American and Caribbean countries both among themselves and with other countries of the world;
>
> (b) Make or sponsor such investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and developments within territories of Latin America and the Caribbean as the Commission deems appropriate;
>
> (c) Undertake or sponsor the collection, evaluation and dissemination of such economic, technological and statistical information as the Commission deems appropriate;
>
> (d) Give special attention in its activities to the problems of economic development and assist in the formulation and development of coordinated policies as a basis for practical action in promoting economic development in the region;
>
> (e) Assist the Council in discharging its functions with respect to the United Nations technical assistance programme, in particular by assisting in the appraisal of these activities in the Latin American and Caribbean region;
>
> (f) In carrying out the above functions, deal as appropriate with the social aspects of economic development and the interrelationship of the economic and social factors.
>
> The Commission shall direct its activities especially towards the study and seeking of solutions of problems arising in Latin America and the Caribbean from world economic maladjustment and towards other problems connected with the world economy, with a view to the cooperation of the Latin American and Caribbean countries in the common effort to achieve worldwide recovery and economic stability.

Membership and composition

198. The Commission has at present 44 members and 8 associate members. The members are: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Spain, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

199. The associate members are: Anguilla, Aruba, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico, Turks and Caicos Islands and United States Virgin Islands. Switzerland participates in a consultative capacity in the work of the Commission by virtue of Council resolution 861 (XXXII) of 21 December 1961.

Subsidiary bodies

200. The Council, in paragraph 10 of its resolution 106 (VI), decided that the Commission might, after discussion with any specialized agency concerned, and with the approval of the Council, establish such subsidiary bodies as it deemed appropriate, for facilitating the carrying out of its responsibilities.

201. At present, the Commission has the following subsidiary bodies:

(a) Central American Development and Cooperation Committee, with subcommittees on trade; statistical coordination; transport; housing, building and planning; electric power and industrial initiatives; and agricultural development;

(b) Regional Council for Planning of the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning;

(c) Committee of High-level Government Experts;

(d) Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee;

(e) Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean;

(f) ECLAC Statistical Conference of the Americas (Council resolution 2000/7 of 25 July 2000).

Reporting procedure

202. The Commission reports directly to the Council (Council resolution 106 (VI), para. 12), and its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*. In addition, matters calling for action by the Council or brought to its attention are included in the annual report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation.

Frequency of meetings

203. The Commission meets biennially, in even years, and in odd years the Committee of the Whole holds its session.

5. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Terms of reference

204. The Commission was established by the Council in its resolution 1818 (LV) of 9 August 1973 as the Economic Commission for Western Asia. In its resolution 1985/69 of 26 July 1985, the Council changed the name of the Commission to the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. Its terms of reference, set out in Council resolution 1818 (LV), as subsequently amended, are as follows:

> The Commission, acting within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the Council, shall, provided that the Commission takes no action with respect to any country without the agreement of the Government of that country:
>
> (a) Initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic reconstruction and development of Western Asia, for raising the level of economic activity in Western Asia and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of the countries of that area both among themselves and with other countries of the world;
>
> (b) Make or sponsor such investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and developments within the territories of Western Asia as the Commission deems appropriate;
>
> (c) Undertake or sponsor the collection, evaluation and dissemination of such economic, technological and statistical information as the Commission deems appropriate;
>
> (d) Perform such advisory services, within the available resources of its secretariat, as the countries of the region may desire, provided that such services do not overlap with those rendered by the specialized agencies or the United Nations Development Programme;
>
> (e) Assist the Council, at its request, in discharging its functions within the region in connection with any economic problems, including problems in the field of technical assistance;
>
> (f) In carrying out the above functions, deal, as appropriate, with the social aspects of economic development and the interrelationship of the economic and social factors.

Membership and composition

205. The current members of the Commission are: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Subsidiary bodies

206. The Commission has the following subsidiary bodies:

(a) Preparatory Committee of the Commission, which meets biennially in odd-numbered years shortly before the biennial session of the Commission (see Council resolutions 1993/1 of 2 February 1993, 1994/26 of 26 July 1994, and 1999/42 of 28 July 1999);

(b) Statistical Committee, which meets biennially (see Council resolution 1993/2 of 2 February 1993);

(c) Committee on Social Development, which meets biennially (see Council resolution 1994/27 of 26 July 1994);

(d) Committee on Energy, which meets biennially (see Council resolution 1995/25 of 24 July 1995);

(e) Committee on Water Resources, which meets biennially (see Council resolutions 1995/26 of 24 July 1995 and 1999/41 of 28 July 1999);

(f) Committee on Transport, which meets biennially (see Council resolution 1997/11 of 18 July 1997);

(g) Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade and Economic Globalization in the countries of the region, which meets biennially (see Council resolutions 1997/12 of 18 July 1997 and 1999/41);

(h) Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation, which meets at least once every two years (see Council resolution 2001/30 of 26 July 2001).

Reporting procedure

207. The Commission reports directly to the Council (Council resolution 1818 (LV), para. 12). Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*. In addition, matters calling for action by the Council or brought to its attention are included in the annual report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation.

Frequency of meetings

208. In accordance with Council resolution 1994/26, the Commission meets biennially in odd-numbered years.

C. Standing committees

1. Committee for Programme and Coordination

Terms of reference

209. The Committee for Programme and Coordination was first established under the name "Special Committee on Coordination" by the Council in its resolution 920 (XXXIV) of 3 August 1962. It was renamed "Committee for Programme and Coordination" by the Council in its resolution 1171 (XLI) of 5 August 1966, "to reflect better its dual responsibilities". The Committee's original terms of reference were set out in those resolutions. In its resolution 31/93 of 14 December 1976, the General Assembly decided "that the Committee for Programme and Coordination shall function as the main subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for planning, programming and coordination" and approved the consolidated terms of reference as set out in the annex to Council resolution 2008 (LX) of 14 May 1976. The terms of reference of the Committee are as follows:

A. Functions

1. The Committee shall function as the main subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for planning, programming and coordination.

2. In particular, the Committee shall:

(a) Review the programmes of the United Nations as defined in the medium-term plan. In performing this function, the Committee shall:

(i) Review the medium-term plan in the off-budget years and the programme budget in budget years;

In reviewing the medium-term plan, the Committee shall examine, in the light of its budgetary implications, the totality of the Secretary-General's work programme, giving particular attention to programme changes arising out of decisions adopted by intergovernmental organs and conferences or suggested by the Secretary-General;

The Committee shall concern itself with medium-term plans formulated for the organizational units involved in each programme of the United Nations and assess the results achieved from current activities, the continuing validity of legislative decisions of more than five years' standing, and the effectiveness of coordination with other units of the Secretariat and members of the United Nations family;

(ii) Recommend an order of priorities among United Nations programmes as defined in the medium-term plan;

(iii) Give guidance to the Secretariat on programme design by interpreting legislative intent so as to assist it in translating legislation into programmes. In this connection, the memorandums on the implementation of resolutions, prepared by the Secretariat after each session of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, shall be made available to the Committee, which, in the periods immediately following the sessions of those bodies, shall cooperate with the Secretariat departments concerned in integrating the new legislation into continuing programmes;

(iv) Consider and develop evaluation procedures and their use in the improvement of programme design;

(v) Make recommendations with respect to work programmes proposed by the Secretariat to give effect to the legislative intent of the relevant policy-making organs, taking into account the need to avoid overlapping and duplication;

(b) Assist the Economic and Social Council in the performance of its coordination functions within the United Nations system.

3. In discharging those responsibilities, the Committee shall:

(a) Consider on a sector-by-sector basis the activities and programmes of the agencies of the United Nations system in order to enable the Council effectively to perform its functions as coordinator of the system and ensure

that the work programmes of the United Nations and its agencies shall be compatible and mutually complementary;

(b) Recommend guidelines for the agencies of the United Nations system on their programmes and activities, taking into account their respective functions and responsibilities and the need for coherence and coordination throughout the system;

(c) Undertake from time to time, upon the recommendation of the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council, a review and appraisal of the implementation of important legislative decisions, so as to determine the degree of coordinated effort undertaken throughout the United Nations system in certain priority fields designated as such by legislative bodies. The Committee shall perform this work, both independently and in consultation with the Administrative Committee on Coordination, and shall be required to report on the results of its review to the legislative body that requested that it be undertaken;

(d) The Committee shall study the reports of the Administrative Committee on Coordination [subsequently, United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination], appropriate reports of United Nations organs, the annual reports of the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency and other relevant documents.

B. Relationships with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Joint Inspection Unit

4. The Committee shall establish useful cooperation with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

5. The members of the Joint Inspection Unit shall be free to participate in meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and arrangements shall be made for periodic joint consultations. The Joint Inspection Unit shall also bring to the attention of the Committee any problem which it may consider important within the scope of the Committee's responsibilities.

6. The reports of the Joint Inspection Unit concerning the economic, social and human rights programmes of the United Nations system, including the reports dealing with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, shall be examined by the Committee for Programme and Coordination, which shall report thereon to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. In its review, the Committee shall take account of any comments which the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions may wish to make on these reports.

210. Pursuant to the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations,[22] the General Assembly, in section II of its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, called for improvement of the representation in the Committee

[22] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 49* (A/41/49).

in conformity with the provisions of paragraph 46 of the annex to Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977. Annex I to resolution 41/213, which is entitled "Budget process", provides that, in off-budget years, "the Committee for Programme and Coordination, acting as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, shall consider the outline and submit, through the Fifth Committee, to the General Assembly its conclusions and recommendations" and that, in budget years, "the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions shall examine the proposed programme budget in accordance with their respective mandates and submit their conclusions and recommendations to the General Assembly, through the Fifth Committee, for the final approval of the programme budget".

211. In its resolution 62/224 of 22 December 2007, the Assembly reaffirmed the role of the Committee as the main subsidiary of the Assembly and the Council for planning, programming and coordination. It also endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on improving its working methods and procedures within the framework of its mandate.[23]

Membership and composition

212. In accordance with General Assembly decision 42/450 of 17 December 1987, the Committee consists of 34 Member States nominated by the Council and elected by the Assembly on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, as follows:

(a) Nine seats for African States;

(b) Seven seats for Asian States;

(c) Seven seats for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(d) Seven seats for Western European and other States;

(e) Four seats for Eastern European States.

Term of office

213. The term of office of members is three years (Council resolution 2008 (LX), annex, para. 7).

Reporting procedure

214. The Committee reports to the Assembly and the Council, as it is a subsidiary body of both. Its reports are presented as supplements to the *Official Records of the General Assembly*.

Frequency of meetings

215. In accordance with its terms of reference (see annex to Council resolution 2008 (LX) of 14 May 1976) the Committee meets for six weeks in [medium-term] plan years [even-numbered years] and for four weeks in budget years [odd-numbered years]. In off-budget years, its session is split into two parts.

[23] Ibid., *Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/62/16), paras. 146-159.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

216. The Committee elects its Bureau at its organizational session, which is to be held no later than six weeks before the beginning of each substantive session. It elects a Chairperson, three Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur for a term of one year.

217. The post of Chairperson and the post of Rapporteur rotate annually among the regional groups in accordance with a decision taken at the Committee's twenty-fifth session, held in 1985. There is a strict pattern of rotation for the post of Chairperson: (a) African States; (b) Eastern European States; (c) Latin American and Caribbean States; (d) Western European and other States; and (e) Asian States.

218. It is customary practice for a member of the regional group that occupied the post of senior Vice-Chairperson to become Chairperson the following year. The post of Rapporteur is occupied by a member of the regional group that occupied the post of Chairperson the previous year.

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

219. The Committee takes action by consensus. The report of the Committee consists of two parts: (a) an account of the discussion; and (b) conclusions and recommendations. The part of the report reflecting the discussion contains the views expressed by members of the Committee that did not command agreement by all delegations. In that connection, at its fortieth session, held in 2000, the Committee agreed that draft reports of the Committee prepared by the Secretariat must accurately reflect the opinions expressed during the discussion on specific matters. All draft reports should be provided to the Rapporteur and Coordinators before circulation so as to ensure that the reports accurately reflect the views expressed during the discussion. The conclusions and recommendations section of the report contains the agreements reached on issues raised under specific agenda items.

Utilization of informal consultations

220. It has been the practice of the Committee to hold informal consultations on all substantive items under consideration in order to facilitate the consensus. At its forty-seventh session, held in 2007, the Committee, while emphasizing the importance of formal meetings, decided to devote more time to informal consultations. It also emphasized the value added of "informal informal" consultations as a tool to reach consensus.

Role of the Secretariat

221. The Secretariat plays a proactive role in promoting action by the Committee. This is accomplished by permitting representatives from the substantive offices concerned to attend both the formal and informal meetings of the Committee in order to respond to questions and provide additional information and clarification as necessary. The Secretariat provides preliminary draft proposals, which are based on the views expressed by delegations during the formal meetings and take into consideration the action required of the Secretary-General, for negotiation by Member States in informal consultations.

Inclusion of a general debate in the work programme

222. The Committee begins its consideration of a specific agenda item by hearing an introduction by the Secretariat. It then holds a discussion on the item.

223. A general debate is held on important items, such as programme planning and the proposed programme budget.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

224. There are no panel discussions in the Committee. At the conclusion of its general discussion or general debate, representatives from the Secretariat answer questions raised by Member States and may also provide additional clarifications and explanations relating to concerns expressed during the general discussion.

225. At its forty-seventh session, the Committee decided to devote one or two meetings of its session to the discussion, with high-level participation, of a specific issue in its programme of work related to coordination.

Relationship with other intergovernmental bodies

226. At its fortieth session, the Committee reiterated its recommendation that the relevant intergovernmental bodies, as well as the Economic and Social Council and the Main Committees of the General Assembly, should include in their programme of work an agenda item on programme planning for review of the proposed medium-term plan and its revisions, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/253 of 21 December 1990 and regulation 3.1 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation.

2. Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

Terms of reference

227. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations was established by the Council in its resolution 3 (II) of 21 June 1946. Its original terms of reference were set out in Council resolution 288 B (X) of 27 February 1950, which was superseded by Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 25 May 1968. The current terms of reference of the Committee are set out in Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

228. The Committee carries out the functions assigned to it by the Council in connection with the arrangements for consultations with non-governmental organizations adopted by the Council in accordance with Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations, as reflected in Council resolution 1996/31. In its proceedings, including when considering applications for granting consultative status to non-governmental organizations, the Committee is guided by the rules of procedure of the Council.

229. The main functions of the Committee are:

(a) Considering applications for general consultative status and special consultative status and for listing on the Roster made by non-governmental organizations and requests for a change in status, and to making recommendations thereon to the Council;

(b) Monitoring, on a regular basis, evolving relationships between non-governmental organizations and the United Nations;

(c) Examining, every fourth year, a brief report submitted to it, through the Secretary-General, by organizations in general consultative status and in special consultative status, of their activities in support of the work of the United Nations, and making recommendations to the Council thereon;

(d) Considering matters concerning non-governmental organizations that may be referred to it by the Council or by its commissions.

230. Furthermore, the Committee consults, in connection with sessions of the Council or at such other times as it may decide, with organizations in general consultative status and special consultative status on matters within their competence, other than items on the agenda of the Council, on which the Council or the Committee or the organization requests consultation, and reports thereon to the Council.

231. The Committee also consults, in connection with any particular session of the Council, with organizations in general consultative status and special consultative status on matters within the competence of the organizations concerning specific items already in the provisional agenda of the Council on which the Council or the Committee or the organization requests consultation, and makes recommendations as to which organizations should be heard by the Council or the appropriate committee and regarding which subjects should be heard. The Committee reports to the Council on such consultations.

232. The Committee also makes recommendations to the Council as to which organizations in general consultative status should make an oral presentation to the Council and on which items they should be heard. In the absence of a subsidiary body of the Council with jurisdiction in a major field of interest to the Council and to organization in special consultative status, the Committee may recommend that an organization in special consultative status be heard by the Council on a subject in its field of interest.

Membership and composition

233 The Committee has 19 members (Council resolution 1981/50 of 20 July 1981) which are elected on the basis of equitable geographical representation. The membership of the Committee consists of:

(a) Five members from African States;

(b) Four members from Asian States;

(c) Two members from Eastern European States;

(d) Four members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Four members from Western European and other States.

Term of office

234. In accordance with Council decision 70 (ORG-75) of 28 January 1975, the term of office of members is four years.

Reporting procedure

235. The Committee reports directly to the Council (rule 82 of the rules of procedure of the Council).

Frequency of meetings

236. The Committee meets annually for three weeks (Council decisions 1995/304 of 26 July 1995 and 1997/297 of 23 July 1997). The Committee also holds informal meetings prior to each session for the purpose of clarifying matters arising from applications for consultative status. If necessary, with the approval of the Council, the Committee holds a resumed session of up to two weeks annually.

Election and term of office of the Bureau

237. In accordance with rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Council, each year, at the commencement of its first meeting, the Committee elects its Chairperson and four Vice-Chairpersons. The Chairperson is usually re-elected for another year. In accordance with rule 19, Bureau members are eligible for re-election. One of the Vice-Chairpersons is subsequently designated to serve also as Rapporteur.

238. The Bureau is always elected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution. A Vice-Chairperson may not be elected Chairperson at the following session. The rotation of the Chairpersonship on a geographical basis has not been strictly established.

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

239. At the first formal meeting of the session, the Chairperson encourages the Committee to adopt its decisions by consensus. If requested, the Committee decides on proposals by a recorded roll-call vote. Otherwise, it takes action through resolutions and decisions adopted by consensus.

Utilization of informal consultations

240. Informal consultations may take place on an ad hoc basis.

Role of the Secretariat

241. The Secretariat may assist in the drafting of texts for action.

Inclusion of a general debate in the work programme

242. There is no general debate in the Committee.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

243. The Committee holds neither panel discussions nor question-and-answer sessions. In its consideration of applications from non-governmental organizations for consultative status with the Council, the Committee provides an opportunity for delegations, members or non-members of the Committee, to pose questions to the representatives of the organizations presenting applications.

3. Committee on Negotiations with Intergovernmental Agencies

Terms of reference

244. The Committee on Negotiations with Intergovernmental Agencies was established by the Council in its resolution 11 (I) of 16 February 1946 in order to carry out negotiations with intergovernmental agencies with a view to bringing them into relationship with the United Nations in accordance with Articles 57 and 63 of the Charter.

Membership and composition

245. The Council decides on the membership and composition of the Committee as and when it decides that this Committee should enter into negotiations with one or more intergovernmental agencies.

D. Ad hoc body

Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics

Terms of reference

246. By resolution 1995/61 of 28 July 1995, the Council requested its President to convene, initially for one year, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics, from within existing resources, to make appropriate recommendations for the due fulfilment of the provisions of its resolutions on the need to harmonize and improve United Nations information systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States, an issue the Council had been seized with since 1991. The Working Group was also asked to make recommendations on ways to ensure that Member States benefited fully from the informatics revolution in meeting the challenges of development, and the specific measures that the agencies, funds, programmes and various bodies of the United Nations system needed to take to help the Member States in that regard.

247. The Council has renewed the mandate of the Working Group every year since then, requesting it, inter alia, to facilitate the successful implementation of the Secretary-General's initiatives in regard to the use of information technology and for continuing the implementation of measures required to achieve its objectives.

248. The functions of the Working Group, as mandated by the Council in resolution 2000/28 of 28 July 2000, are:

(a) To improve electronic connectivity via the Internet for all Member States in their capitals and at major United Nations locations, inter alia, through the enhanced connectivity of permanent missions to the Internet and United Nations databases;

(b) To improve the access of Member States to a wider range of United Nations information on economic and social, development and political issues and other substantive programming areas, and to have all official documents available via the Internet;

(c) To improve electronic links among Member States, the United Nations and the specialized agencies;

(d) To provide training for the staff of permanent missions to enable them to take advantage of the facilities being developed for Member States, in particular electronic mail and Internet websites;

(e) To enhance the capacity of Member States to access United Nations data online, using low-cost telecommunications links or providing other modalities, for example, CD-ROM, whereby Member States can have access to specialized databases not available on the Internet;

(f) To make arrangements, as appropriate, to provide permanent missions of developing countries with the hardware platform to utilize Internet technology;

(g) To use videoconferencing to further communication and interaction between the United Nations, permanent missions and academic institutions;

(h) To intensify contacts with the private sector so as to bring its wealth of experience to bear on the work of the Working Group.

Membership

249. The Working Group is open to all States.

Reporting procedure

250. The Chairperson of the Working Group presents an oral report to the Council on the progress achieved in fulfilling its mandate.

Frequency of meetings

251. The working group meets on an as required basis.

E. Expert bodies composed of governmental experts

1. Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Terms of reference

252. A Committee of experts on the international transport of dangerous goods was first appointed in accordance with Council resolution 468 G (XV) of 15 April 1953 to study the issue and present a report. The mandate of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods was subsequently expanded (see Council resolutions 1488 (XLVIII) of 22 May 1970, 1743 (LIV) of 4 May 1973 and 1973 (LIX) of 30 July 1975). A group of experts on explosives was also created by the Council in resolution 724 C (XXVIII) of 17 July 1959 to deal with the listing and harmonizing of the packing of explosives. By resolution 1488 (XLVIII), the Council decided that the Group should function as a subsidiary body of the Committee. A Group of Rapporteurs on the Packing of Dangerous Goods was set up by the Committee at its third session, and the creation of this subsidiary body was endorsed by the Council when approving the report of the Committee on its third session (Council resolution 994 (XXXVI) of 16 December 1963). This group was renamed "Group of Rapporteurs" in 1975. In 1989, the Group of Rapporteurs and the Group of Experts on Explosives were combined and renamed Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (see Council resolution 1989/104 of 27 July

1989). Since 1963, the Economic Commission for Europe at Geneva has served as the secretariat of the Committee.

253. On the basis of a proposal transmitted by the President of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (E/1999/90) and of the related recommendations of the Committee (E/1999/43, para. 21), the Council, by resolution 1999/65 of 26 October 1999, reconfigured, as from 2001, the Committee and its Subcommittee into the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, with one Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and a second Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.

254. The terms of reference of the Committee, which are contained in the annex to resolution 1999/65, are as follows:

> The Committee shall deal with strategic issues rather than technical issues. It is not envisaged that it will review, change or revisit technical recommendations of the Subcommittees. Accordingly, its main functions shall be to:
>
> (a) Approve the work programmes for the Subcommittees in the light of available resources;
>
> (b) Coordinate strategic and policy directions in areas of shared interests and overlap;
>
> (c) Give formal endorsement to the recommendations of the Subcommittees and provide the mechanism for channelling them to the Economic and Social Council;
>
> (d) Facilitate and coordinate the smooth running of the Subcommittees.

Subsidiary bodies of the Committee of Experts

(i) Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

255. In pursuance of Council resolution 1999/65, the Subcommittee replaced the existing Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and its Subcommittee, with the same terms of reference. The original terms of reference are contained in Council resolution 468 G (XV). They have been subsequently modified, confirmed or extended in the various resolutions adopted by the Council when considering the work of the Committee every two years, as reflected, inter alia, in paragraphs 166 to 175 of E/1996/97, Council resolutions 645 G (XXIII) of 26 April 1957, 724 C (XXVIII), 871 (XXXIII) of 10 April 1962, 924 (XXXVI) of 16 December 1963, 1488 (XLVIII), 1743 (LIV), 1744 (LIV) of 4 May 1973, 1973 (LIX), 2050 (LXII) of 5 May 1977 and, in addition, Council resolutions 1995/6 of 19 July 1995, 1997/3 of 18 July 1997 (referring to E/1997/16, para. 21), 1999/62 of 30 July 1999 (referring to document E/1999/43, para. 34).

256. As consolidated, the terms of reference can be summarized as follows:

(a) To recommend and to define groupings or classification of dangerous goods on the basis of the character of risk involved, and to develop related classification tests and criteria;

(b) To list the principal dangerous goods moving in commerce and assigning each to its proper grouping or classification;

(c) To recommend marks or labels for each grouping or classification, which shall identify the risk graphically and without regard to printed text;

(d) To recommend the simplest possible requirements for shipping papers covering dangerous goods;

(e) To address the problem of packing (including construction, testing and use of packagings, intermediate bulk containers, large packagings, gas cylinders and gas receptacles);

(f) To study the questions concerning the construction, testing and use of tanks other than those permanently fixed to, or forming part of, the structure of seagoing vessels or inland waterway craft;

(g) To develop provisions for the transport of solid substances in bulk in freight containers;

(h) To address the problem of the joint transport of dangerous goods, including questions of compatibility and segregation;

(i) To consider giving each of the dangerous goods a numerical designation, which, in addition to the "dangerous goods" label would indicate the group of compatibility, which could be instrumental in the solution of the problems of the joint transportation of dangerous goods;

(j) To consider supplementing the list of dangerous goods with indications of the properties and the category of danger of such goods, the firefighting means, other safety measures regarding such goods and their packing;

(k) To investigate divergencies existing in the modal practices applicable to the transport of dangerous goods in respect of their classification, identification, labelling and packaging;

(l) To study, in consultation with other organizations concerned, particularly the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Air Transport Association and the regional commissions, the possibility of an international convention on the transport of dangerous goods by all modes of transport;

(m) To take into account the special problems of developing countries;

(n) To elaborate proposals for globally harmonized criteria for the classification of flammable, explosive and reactive materials, taking account of aspects not necessarily covered under transport safety regulations, such as the protection of workers, consumers and the general environment, in cooperation with experts from the International Labour Organization and the International Programme on Chemical Safety;

(o) To cooperate with the International Programme of Chemical Safety for the implementation of Agenda 21;

(p) To reformat the Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods into Model Regulations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods to keep them up to date and to rationalize their development.

257. In March 1959, the Committee, after having developed recommendations concerning the labelling of radioactive material, recognized the necessity of coordination with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the drafting of recommendations relating to the transport of such material. Consequently, the Council, in its resolution 724 (XXVIII) of 17 July 1959, requested the Secretary-General to inform IAEA of its desire that IAEA be entrusted with the drafting of recommendations on the transport of radioactive material, on the understanding that those recommendations would be consistent with the principles adopted by the Committee and that they would be established in consultation with the United Nations and the specialized agencies concerned. This has led to continuous cooperation between the Committee, the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Economic Commission for Europe. When it was decided to reformat the provisions of the Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods into the Model Regulations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, it was also agreed, after consultation with IAEA, that the Committee would incorporate the provisions of the IAEA Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material into the Model Regulations (Council resolution 1997/3).

(ii) Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

258. As set forth in the annex to Council resolution 1999/65, the functions of the Subcommittee are to:

(a) Act as custodian of the globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals, managing and giving direction to the harmonization process;

(b) Keep the system up to date, as necessary, considering the need to introduce changes to ensure its continued relevance and practical utility, and determining the need for and timing of the updating of technical criteria, while working with existing bodies, as appropriate;

(c) Promote understanding and use of the system and encourage feedback;

(d) Make the system available for worldwide use and application;

(e) Make guidance available on the application of the system, and on the interpretation and use of technical criteria to support consistency of application;

(f) Prepare work programmes and submit recommendations to the Committee.

Composition and membership

259. Under Council resolution 645 G (XXIII), the original Committee was to consist of "not more than nine qualified experts from countries interested in the international transport of dangerous goods". Governments were invited to make available, at the request of the Secretary-General and at their own expense, the members of the Committee of Experts. The Council, in its resolution 1973 (LIX), enlarged the composition of the Committee of Experts by adding five members from

developing countries, so as to ensure the adequate participation of such countries. Subsequently, the Secretary-General received applications from various countries. In 2007, 36 countries were full members of the Committee and members of one or both of the Subcommittees. In the same year, 18 observer countries participated their work in accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.

Reporting procedure

260. The Secretary-General submits to the Council, on a biennial basis, a report on the work of the Committee of Experts.

Frequency of meetings

261. As from 2001-2002, the reconfigured Committee meets on a biennial basis, while the two Subcommittees meet back-to-back, twice each year.

2. Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting

Terms of reference

262. The Council, in its resolution 1979/44 of 11 May 1979, established the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting. By resolution 1982/67 of 27 October 1982, the Council established the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, deciding that it should: (a) serve as an international body for the consideration of issues of accounting and reporting falling within the scope of the work of the Commission on Transnational Corporations, in order to improve the availability and comparability of information disclosed by transnational corporations; (b) review developments in this field, including the work of standard-setting bodies; and (c) concentrate on establishing priorities, taking into account the needs of home and host countries, particularly those of developing countries.

263. In addition, the Council decided that the Group should meet for a period of two weeks not more than once a year and should report to the Commission on Transnational Corporations on further steps to be taken in pursuit of the long-term objective of the international harmonization of accounting and reporting within the scope of the work of the Commission, particularly with regard to the comprehensive information system and the code of conduct on transnational corporations then being formulated, on the understanding that duplication of work should be avoided. In its resolution 1991/56 of 26 July 1991, the Council decided that the Commission, at its annual session, should keep under review the work of the Group and, in particular, should review the mandate, terms of reference and achievements of the Group after five years, with a view to deciding on the advisability of its continuation.

264. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/130 of 19 December 1994, the Intergovernmental Working Group, along with the Commission on Transnational Corporations, has been incorporated into the institutional machinery of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Membership and composition

265. In accordance with paragraph 4 (b) of Council resolution 1982/67, the Group, taking into account the different existing systems of accounting and reporting and without prejudice to the principle of equitable geographical distribution, is composed of 34 members elected by the Council on the following basis:

(a) Nine members from African States;

(b) Seven members from Asian States;

(c) Three members from Eastern European States;

(d) Six members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Nine members from Western European and other States.

Pursuant to paragraph 4 (c) of the same resolution, each State so elected shall appoint an expert with appropriate experience in the field of accounting and reporting.

Term of office

266. The term of office of members is three years (Council resolution 1982/67, para. 4 (d)).

Reporting procedure

267. The Group reports to the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission, a subsidiary body of the Trade and Development Board (see para. 368 below).

3. United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

Terms of reference

268. The Council, in its resolution 715 A (XXVII) of 23 April 1959, requested the Secretary-General to set up a small group of consultants to consider the technical problems of domestic standardization of geographical names, including the preparation of a statement of the general and regional problems involved, to prepare draft recommendations for the procedures, principally linguistic, that might be followed in the standardization of their own names by individual countries and to report to the Council on the desirability of holding an international conference on this subject and of the sponsoring of working groups based on common linguistic systems.

269. The First United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names was held at Geneva from 4 to 22 September 1967. On the basis of the recommendations of the Conference, the Council, in its resolution 1314 (XLVI) of 31 May 1968, approved the terms of reference for the Ad Hoc Group of Experts, which was renamed United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names by the Council in a decision adopted at its 1854th meeting, 4 May 1973.

270. In its decision 1988/116 of 25 May 1988, the Council approved the statute and rules of procedure of the Group of Experts (E/1988/22, annex II). In its decision 1993/226 of 12 July 1993, the Council approved a new version of the statute (E/1993/21 and Corr.1, annex).

271. The basic aims of the Group of Experts are:

(a) To emphasize the importance of the standardization of geographical names at the national and international levels and to demonstrate the benefits to be derived from such standardization;

(b) To collect the results of the work of national and international bodies dealing with the standardization of geographical names and to facilitate the dissemination of these results to States Members of the United Nations;

(c) To study and propose principles, policies and methods suitable for resolving problems of national and international standardization;

(d) To play an active role, by facilitating the supply of scientific and technical help, in particular to developing countries, in creating mechanisms for the national and international standardization of geographical names;

(e) To provide a vehicle for liaison and coordination among Member States, and between Member States and international organizations, on work associated with the standardization of geographical names;

(f) To implement the tasks assigned as a result of the resolutions adopted at the United Nations Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names.

272. To further the aims stated above, the functions of the Group of Experts are:

(a) To develop procedures and establish mechanisms for standardization in response to national requirements and particular requests;

(b) To undertake preparatory work for the periodic international conferences on the standardization of geographical names, to provide continuity for activities between conferences and to provide leadership in the implementation of resolutions adopted at the conferences;

(c) To encourage the discussion and study of practical and theoretical steps directed towards standardization;

(d) To coordinate the activities of linguistic/geographical divisions formed to further the work at the national level, to encourage the active participation of countries and divisions, and to promote a degree of uniformity in the work undertaken;

(e) To create any necessary structure to supplement the work of divisions and to deal with issues beyond the scope of a division;

(f) To develop appropriate programmes to assist individual countries and groups of countries to achieve standardization where it is lacking;

(g) To make mapping organizations aware of the importance of using standardized geographical names;

(h) To maintain liaison with international organizations dealing with related subjects and encourage group divisions to participate in the United Nations regional or other cartographic conferences;

(i) To work at the highest possible national, international and United Nations level to interrelate toponymy and cartography;

(j) To make standardization principles and standardized geographical names available as practical information for as wide a user community as possible, through all appropriate media.

Membership and composition

273. The Group is composed of some 150 experts from 52 countries, organized into 22 linguistic/geographical divisions. Within this Group, several working groups have been created to carry out special tasks, such as the setting up of training courses in toponymy, the comparative study of the various systems of transliteration towards a single romanization system for each of the non-Roman writing systems and the production of international gazetteers.

Reporting procedure

274. The Group of Experts normally reports to the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. In addition, the Secretary-General presents a report on each session of the Group of Experts to the subsequent session of the Council.

Frequency of meetings

275. The Group of Experts normally meets biennially. In years when a United Nations conference on the standardization of geographical names is held, it meets on dates immediately preceding the opening date of the conference and immediately following the closing date of the conference.

Election of the Bureau

276. In accordance with rule 5 of its rules of procedure, as amended by the Council in its decision 2002/307 of 25 October 2002, the Group elects the following officers from among the experts representing the divisions: a Chairperson, two Vice-Chairpersons and two Rapporteurs.

F. Expert bodies composed of members serving in their personal capacity

1. Committee for Development Policy

Terms of reference

277. In its resolution 1998/46 of 31 July 1998, the Council decided that the Committee for Development Planning should be renamed Committee for Development Policy. The Committee for Development Planning had been created by the Council in its resolution 1035 (XXXVII) of 15 August 1964, which requested the Secretary-General "to consider, as the work of United Nations bodies on economic planning and projections progressed, the establishment of a group of experts in planning theory and practice to work as a consultative body within the United Nations". Its original terms of reference are contained in paragraph 3 of Council resolution 1079 (XXXIX) of 28 July 1965, and were subsequently modified in various resolutions.

278. In accordance with paragraph 10 of Council resolution 1998/46, the Council decides on an appropriate work programme for the Committee and advises it each year about the theme or themes that the Committee should consider at its annual session. The Council takes the decision on the theme or themes at its substantive session (Council resolution 1999/51 of 29 July 1999).

279. The functions of the Committee are as follows:

(a) Continue the triennial review of the status of the least developed countries;

(b) Consider issues identified by the Council;

(c) Submit a report to the Council at its substantive session, including the outcome of its deliberations on the theme or themes identified by the Council and proposals concerning its work programme for the following year.

The General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the subsidiary bodies of the Council can also propose, through the Council, issues for consideration by the Committee.

Membership and composition

280. In accordance with paragraph 8 of Council resolution 1998/46, the Committee comprises 24 independent experts. They are nominated by the Secretary-General, after consultation with interested Governments, and are appointed by the Council. The experts are drawn from the fields of economic development, social development and environmental protection, in order to avoid the need to engage the assistance of consultants and so as to reflect an adequate geographical and gender balance.

Term of office

281. The term of office of the experts is three years.

Reporting procedure

282. The Committee reports directly to the Council. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Frequency of meetings

283. In accordance with Council resolution 1998/46, the Committee meets annually for a period not exceeding five working days. Once every three years, the Committee undertakes a review of the list of the least developed countries and makes recommendations for changes to the Economic and Social Council.

2. Committee of Experts on Public Administration

Terms of reference

284. The Council, in its resolution 1199 (XLII) of 24 May 1967, requested the Secretary-General to elaborate more specific objectives and programmes in the field of public administration, in close collaboration with the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations concerned. It also decided that the United Nations programme in public administration should from time to time be reviewed by a

meeting of experts and that the report of the meeting should be submitted to it for consideration.

285. In subsequent resolutions, the Council invited the Secretary-General to convene meetings of the Group of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance and assigned the Group specific guidelines for consideration. Those guidelines have included, in particular, an examination of changes and trends in public administration and finance at both the national and international levels, a review of issues and priorities in public administration and finance for development in developing countries, and the progress achieved in implementing the relevant provisions of the International Development Strategy.

286. Following the resumed fiftieth session of the General Assembly on public administration and development and guided by the resulting resolution 50/225 of 19 April 1996, the thirteenth and fourteenth meetings of the Group of Experts were convened in 1997 and 1998, respectively, to assist in the implementation of the decisions taken by the Assembly. At its fourteenth meeting, the Group recommended that the Secretary-General conduct a five-year assessment of the progress made in the implementation of resolution 50/225 and to report his findings to the Assembly through the Council in 2001. The Assembly endorsed that recommendation in its resolution 53/201 of 15 December 1998.

287. At its fifteenth meeting, held from 8 to 12 May 2000, the Group of Experts made a number of recommendations on its status and reporting arrangements, which were endorsed by the Council in decision 2000/231 of 27 July 2000.

288. In paragraph 1 of the annex to its resolution 2001/45 of 20 December 2001, the Council decided that the Group of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance should be renamed the Committee of Experts on Public Administration and should continue to be a subsidiary body of the Council, without change in its mandate.

289. Further, in paragraph 7 of its resolution 2005/3 of 31 March 2005, the Council requested the Secretary-General to focus the work of the Organization on public administration according to the recommendations contained in Council decision 2004/302 of 23 July 2004, General Assembly resolution 58/231 of 23 December 2003 and the report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its third session,[24] in particular those aimed at strengthening the human capital in the public sector, facilitating access to information and best practices, promoting good governance and accountability in public administration, at the national and international levels, and strengthening public administration institutions in developing countries, in particular the least developed countries.

Multi-year programme of work

290. At its fifth session, held in 2006, the Committee decided to work according to a multi-year programme and to link it more closely to the theme of the high-level segment of the Council's substantive session, and set priority areas for its work through 2009. That decision was approved by the Council in resolution 2006/47 of 28 July 2006.

[24] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2004, Supplement No. 44* (E/2004/44).

Membership and composition

291. In paragraph 2 of the annex to its resolution 2001/45, the Council de ided that the Committee would comprise 24 experts, who would serve in their personal capacity. The experts are nominated by the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, and appointed by the Council. The membership is drawn from the interrelated fields of public economics, public administration and public finance, and is to reflect an adequate geographical and gender balance. The term of office of members is four years.

Reporting procedure

292. The Committee reports directly to the Council (Council resolution 2001/45, annex, para. 4). Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Frequency of meetings

293. In accordance with paragraph 4 of Council resolution 2003/60 of 25 July 2003, the Committee meets annually for one week.

3. Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

Terms of reference

294. The Council, in its resolution 1273 (XLIII) of 4 August 1967, requested the Secretary-General to set up a group of experts to explore, in consultation with interested international agencies, ways and means for facilitating the conclusion of tax treaties between developed and developing countries, including the formulation, as appropriate, of possible guidelines and techniques for use in such tax treaties that would be acceptable to both groups of countries and would fully safeguard their respective revenue interests.

295. In its resolution 1765 (LIV) of 18 May 1973, the Council requested the Ad Hoc Group to continue its work on guidelines for tax treaties between developed and developing countries and to study the implementation of tax agreements in such areas as income allocation, international tax evasion and avoidance and tax incentives. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements for convening the Ad Hoc Group at regular intervals.

296. In its resolution 1980/13 of 28 April 1980, the Council endorsed the recommendation of the Secretary-General contained in his report (E/1980/11 and Corr.1, para. 52) that, since the Group of Experts on Tax Treaties between Developed and Developing Countries had finalized the United Nations Model Double Taxation Convention between Developed and Developing Countries, it should be given a broader title. The Council also advised that the name of the Group had been changed to Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters. In the same resolution, the Council urged the Ad Hoc Group of Experts to expedite its work on international tax evasion and avoidance with a view to working out, as soon as possible, proposals for international cooperation to combat such evasion and avoidance.

297. In its decision 2000/232 of 27 July 2000, the Council endorsed the recommendations made by the Group of Experts at its ninth meeting, which

included keeping under a biennial revision process the United Nations Model Double Taxation Convention between Developed and Developing Countries.

298. In its resolution 2004/69 of 11 November 2004, the Council decided, inter alia, that:

(a) The Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters should be renamed the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters;

(b) The Committee should:

(i) Keep under review and update as necessary the *United Nations Model Double Taxation Convention between Developed and Developing Countries*[25] and the *Manual for the Negotiation of Bilateral Tax Treaties between Developed and Developing Countries*;[26]

(ii) Provide a framework for dialogue with a view to enhancing and promoting international tax cooperation among national tax authorities;

(iii) Consider how new and emerging issues could affect international cooperation in tax matters and develop assessments, commentaries and appropriate recommendations;

(iv) Make recommendations on capacity-building and the provision of technical assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

(v) Give special attention to developing countries and countries with economies in transition in dealing with all the above issues.

Membership, composition and term of office

299. In accordance with Council resolution 2004/69, the Committee comprises 25 members nominated by Governments and acting in their expert capacity, who are drawn from the fields of tax policy and tax administration and who are selected to reflect an adequate equitable geographical distribution, representing different tax systems. The members are appointed by the Secretary-General, after notification is given to the Council.

Reporting procedure

300. The Committee reports directly to the Council (Council resolution 2004/69).

Frequency of meetings

301. The Committee meets annually for not more than five days (Council resolution 2004/69).

[25] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.XVI.2.

[26] ST/ESA/PAD/SER.E/37.

4. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Terms of reference and working methods

302. The Council, in its decision 1978/10 of 3 May 1978, decided to establish a sessional working group on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for the purpose of assisting the Council in the consideration of reports submitted by States parties to the International Covenant, in conformity with article 16 of the Covenant and in accordance with the programme established by the Council in its resolution 1988 (LX) of 11 May 1976, under which the States parties were to furnish in biennial stages the reports referred to in article 16 of the Covenant.

303. The Council, in its resolution 1979/43 of 11 May 1979, also entrusted the Working Group with the task of considering the reports of the specialized agencies, submitted to the Council in accordance with article 18 of the Covenant and the programme established under Council resolution 1988 (LX), on the progress made in achieving the observance of the provisions of the Covenant falling within the scope of their activities.

304. By Council resolution 1982/33 of 6 May 1982, the Working Group was renamed "Sessional Working Group of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights". By Council resolution 1985/17 of 28 May 1985, the Sessional Working Group was renamed "Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights".

305. The procedures and methods of work established by the Council in its resolutions 1988 (LX), 1979/43 and 1982/33, decision 1978/10 and decision 1981/158 of 8 May 1981 remain in force insofar as they are not superseded or modified by Council resolution 1985/17. The Council, in its decision 1990/251 of 25 May 1990, approved the Committee's provisional rules of procedure and also approved the holding of a pre-sessional working group of the Committee one to three months prior to the session.

306. Since its first session, in 1987, the Committee has made a concerted effort to devise appropriate working methods which adequately reflect the nature of the tasks with which it is entrusted. In the course of its sessions, it has sought to modify and develop these methods in the light of experience. These methods will continue to evolve.[27]

Membership and composition

307. In accordance with Council resolution 1985/17, the Committee has 18 members who are experts with recognized competence in the field of human rights, serving in their personal capacity, due consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution and to the representation of different forms of social and legal systems; to this end, 15 seats are equally distributed among the regional groups, while the additional 3 seats are allocated in accordance with the increase in the total number of States parties per regional group. The time of preparation of the present note, one additional seat each had been allocated to the African States, the

[27] For the most recent overview of the Committee's working methods, see *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 2* and corrigendum (E/2000/22 and Corr.1), chap. III.

Asian States and the Eastern European States. The members of the Committee are elected by the Council from a list of persons nominated by States parties to the International Covenant. Members serve for a term of office of four years and may be re-elected.

Frequency of meetings and reporting procedure

308. The Committee holds two annual sessions, each of three weeks' duration (Council resolution 1995/39 of 25 July 1995) and reports directly to the Council. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*. In view of the Committee's workload, the Council has approved the holding of pre-sessional working groups of one week's duration.

5. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

Terms of reference

309. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was established by the Council in its resolution 2000/22 of 28 July 2000, as a subsidiary organ of the Council.

310. The Permanent Forum serves as an advisory body to the Council with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues within the mandate of the Council relating to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. In so doing, the Permanent Forum:

(a) Provides expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council, as well as to programmes, funds and agencies of the United Nations, through the Council;

(b) Raises awareness and promotes the integration and coordination of activities relating to indigenous issues within the United Nations system;

(c) Prepares and disseminates information on indigenous issues.

In accordance with article 42 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,[28] the United Nations and its bodies, including the Permanent Forum, shall promote respect for and full application of the provisions of the Declaration and follow up its effectiveness.

Membership and composition

311. The Permanent Forum is composed of 16 members, according to the following pattern:

(a) Eight members nominated by Governments and elected by the Council, as follows, in conformity with Council decision 2001/316 of 26 July 2001:

(i) One seat for African States;

(ii) One seat for Asian States;

(iii) One seat for Eastern European States;

(iv) One seat for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(v) One seat for Western European and other States;

[28] General Assembly resolution 61/295, annex.

(vi) Three seats to rotate among the five regional groups in accordance with the following pattern:

Election 1	*Election 2*	*Election 3*	*Election 4*	*Election 5*
Latin America and Caribbean	Africa	Western Europe and other	Eastern Europe	Asia
Western Europe and other	Eastern Europe	Asia	Latin America and Caribbean	Africa
Asia	Latin American and Caribbean	Africa	Western Europe and other	Eastern Europe

(b) Eight members to be appointed by the President of the Council following formal consultations with the Bureau and regional groups through their coordinators, on the basis of broad consultations with indigenous organizations, taking into account the diversity and geographical distribution of the indigenous people of the world as well as the principles of transparency, representativity and equal opportunity for all indigenous people, including internal processes, when appropriate, and local indigenous consultation processes.

All members serve in their personal capacity as independent experts on indigenous issues.

312. In addition, States, United Nations bodies and organs, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council may participate as observers in the work of the Forum. Organizations of indigenous people may equally participate as observers in accordance with the procedures that were applied in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights of the Commission on Human Rights.

Term of office

313. Members serve for a period of three years with the possibility of re-election or reappointment for one further period.

Reporting procedures

314. The Permanent Forum submits an annual report to the Council on its activities, including any recommendations for approval. Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Election of the Bureau

315. By decision 2003/303 of 25 July 2003, the Council confirmed the practice of the Permanent Forum to designate as its Bureau one Chairperson, four Vice-chairpersons and one Rapporteur.

Frequency of meetings, rules, decision-making, and review process

316. In pursuance of Council resolution 2000/22, the Permanent Forum holds an annual session of 10 working days. It applies the rules of procedure established for

subsidiary organs of the Council as applicable, unless otherwise decided by the Council. The principle of consensus governs the work of the Permanent Forum.

Methods of work

317. It is the practice of the Permanent Forum to select a special theme for consideration at each annual session and to examine the implementation of recommendations concerning its six mandated areas (economic and social development, environment, health, education, culture and human rights) and the Millennium Development Goals.

G. Related bodies

1. International Narcotics Control Board

Terms of reference

318. The International Narcotics Control Board was established pursuant to article 9 of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961,[29] as amended by the 1972 Protocol.[30]

319. The Board, in cooperation with Governments, and subject to the terms of the Convention, endeavours to limit the cultivation, production, manufacture and use of drugs to an amount adequate for medical and scientific purposes, to ensure their availability for such purposes and to prevent the illicit cultivation, production and manufacture of, and illicit trafficking in and use of, drugs (Single Convention, article 9, para. 4).

Membership and composition

320. In accordance with article 9, paragraph 1, of the Single Convention, the Board consists of 13 members to be elected by the Council as follows:

(a) Three members with medical, pharmacological or pharmaceutical experience from a list of at least five persons nominated by the World Health Organization;

(b) Ten members from a list of persons nominated by the Members of the United Nations and by Parties to the Convention that are not Members of the United Nations.

321. The Council, with due regard to the principle of equitable geographical representation, is to give consideration to the importance of including on the Board, in equitable proportion, persons possessing a knowledge of the drug situation in the producing, manufacturing and consuming countries, and connected with such countries (ibid., para. 3). In its resolution 1999/30, the Council invited Member States and the World Health Organization, when selecting candidates for the Board, to ensure the necessary multidisciplinary expertise and the required independence and impartiality for the effective discharge of the responsibilities of the Board.

[29] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 520, No. 7515.

[30] Ibid., vol. 796, No. 14152.

Term of office

322. The term of office of members is five years and members may be re-elected (ibid., article 10, para. 1). The term of office of each member of the Board ends on the eve of the first meeting of the Board that his or her successor is entitled to attend (ibid., para. 2).

Reporting procedure

323. The report of the Board is submitted annually to the Council.

Frequency of meetings

324. The Board meets as often as, in its opinion, may be necessary for the proper discharge of its functions (ibid., article 11, para. 2). It usually holds two or three sessions in each calendar year.

2. Executive Board of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Terms of reference

325. The Institute was established by the Council in its resolution 1998 (LX) of 12 May 1976 in conformity with General Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, in which the Assembly decided in principle to establish the Institute, based on a recommendation made by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held in Mexico City from 19 June to 2 July 1975. The Institute is an autonomous institution funded from voluntary contributions; it was established within the framework of the United Nations, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, to serve as a vehicle at the international level for undertaking research and establishing training programmes that would contribute to the integration and mobilization of women in development, raise awareness of women's issues worldwide and better assist women to meet new challenges and directions.

326. According to its statute (A/39/511, annex), which was approved by the Council in its decision 1984/124 of 24 May 1984 and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 39/249 of 9 April 1985, the objectives of the Institute are to stimulate and assist, through research, training and the collection and dissemination of information, the advancement of women and their integration in the developmental process, both as participants and as beneficiaries (ibid., art. II). The Council, in its resolution 2000/24, of 28 July 2000, decided to amend article VI, paragraph 1, of the statute, as follows:

> "The activities of the Institute shall be funded by voluntary contributions from States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, foundations, including the United Nations Foundation, private sources and other sources in accordance with article VII of the statute."

327. The principal functions of the Institute are:

(a) To conduct research and studies that would enhance the effective integration and mobilization of women in development;

(b) To establish training programmes, including a fellowship programme and advisory services;

(c) To establish and maintain a system of information, documentation and communication so as to enable the Institute to respond to the need for disseminating information worldwide on women's issues.

328. In its resolution 54/150 of 17 December 1999, the Assembly endorsed a new structure and working method for the Institute, based on the establishment of an electronic Gender Awareness Information and Networking System.

329. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 2003/57 of 24 July 2003, the Council decided to amend articles III and IV of the statute of the Institute and, inter alia, to replace the Board of Trustees with an Executive Board. The current statute is contained in the annex to that resolution.

330. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 2007/37 of 27 July 2007, the Council reaffirmed the specific mandate of the Institute, as a central focal point for research and training on gender issues within the United Nations system, to conduct research and training for gender equality and the empowerment of women. In paragraph 2 of the same resolution, the Council, requested the Institute:

(a) To intensify its training activities on the basis of lessons learned and replicate best practices and to continue to implement innovative methods of work, in order to have a concrete impact on policies and programmes at all levels and respond to both existing and future challenges, particularly in developing countries, including the least developed countries in all regions;

(b) To further coordinate its activities and to develop its programme of work in collaboration with all relevant United Nations bodies and to strengthen its cooperation with Governments and national mechanisms of gender equality, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and academia;

(c) To increase its cooperation with the Commission on the Status of Women and with other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, particularly in bringing to their attention gender concerns in emerging issues.

Membership, composition and responsibilities of the Executive Board

331. In accordance with article III, paragraph 2, of the revised statute of the Institute, the Executive Board is composed of two governmental representatives from each of the five regional groups of the United Nations. The Director of the Institute, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, a representative of each of the regional commissions and a representative of the host country serve as ex officio members of the Board.

332. The responsibilities of the Executive Board are:

(a) To formulate principles, policies and guidelines for the activities of the Institute;

(b) To consider and approve the work programme and budget proposals of the Institute on the basis of recommendations submitted to it by the Director of the Institute;

(c) To make recommendations for the operation of the Institute.

Term of office

333. The term of office of members is three years and they are eligible for reappointment for one further term (Council resolution 2003/57, annex, art. III, para. 2 (a)).

Frequency of meetings and reporting procedure

334. The Executive Board meets at least once a year and reports to the Council periodically and where appropriate to the General Assembly (ibid., para. 3 (d)).

3. Committee for the United Nations Population Award

Terms of reference

335. The United Nations Population Award was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 36/201 of 17 December 1981, as amended by the Assembly in its decision 41/445 of 5 December 1986. The Regulations Governing the Award are contained in the annex to Assembly resolution 36/201, which was also amended by the Assembly in decision 41/445. The Committee selects the recipients of the award.

Membership and composition

336. The Committee for the United Nations Population Award is composed of 10 representatives of States Members of the United Nations, elected by the Council, with due regard to the principle of equitable geographical representation and the need to include those Member States that have made contributions for the Award. The Secretary-General and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund serve as ex officio members. In addition, five eminent individuals who have made significant contributions to population-related activities serve as honorary members in an advisory capacity; they are selected by the members of the Committee for a renewable term of three years.

Term of office

337. The term of office of members is three years (General Assembly resolution 36/201, annex, art. 4, para. 1 (a)).

Reporting procedure

338. The Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, on behalf of the Committee, reports annually to the General Assembly.

Frequency of meetings

339. The Committee meets once a year (ibid., art. 5, para. 3).

4. Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

Terms of reference

340. The Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) was established by the Council in its resolution 1994/24 of 26 July 1994.

By its resolution 1999/36 of 26 July 1999, the Council changed the name to Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. It comprises the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Bank and the United Nations Drug Control Programme. The Programme outline is contained in the annex to Council resolution 1994/24.

341. Following its consideration of the report of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations of the Programme (see E/1995/71), the Council, in its resolution 1995/2 of 3 July 1995, endorsed the arrangements for the Programme Coordinating Board as set out in section VI of that report. The Board serves as the governance structure for the Programme. Its functions are as follows:

(a) To establish broad policies and priorities for the Programme, taking into account the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992;

(b) To make recommendations to the co-sponsoring organizations regarding their activities in support of the Programme, including those of mainstreaming;

(c) To review and decide upon the planning and execution of the Programme;

(d) To review and approve the plan of action and budget for each financial period, longer-term plans of action and their financial implications, and the annual financial statements;

(e) To review periodic reports that evaluate the progress of the Programme towards the achievement of its goals.

342. Legislative action by the General Assembly in regard to the Joint Programme includes the adoption, in 2001, of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS[31] and, in 2006, of the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS.[32]

Membership and composition

343. The Board is composed of 22 Member States, with the participation of the seven co-sponsors and five eligible non-governmental organizations. Member States are elected by the Council (Council decision 1995/223 of 5 May 1995) according to the following regional distribution:

(a) Five seats for African States;

(b) Five seats for Asian States;

(c) Two seats for Eastern European States;

(d) Three seats for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Seven seats for Western European and other States.

The arrangements for the participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the Board are outlined in the annex to Council resolution 1995/2.

[31] General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.

[32] General Assembly resolution 60/262, annex.

Term of office

344. The term of office of members is three years.

Reporting procedures

345. The Board reports to the Council as requested.

III. Subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields

Standing bodies

1. Committee for Programme and Coordination

346. The Committee for Programme and Coordination is a subsidiary body of both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (see paras. 209-226 above).

2. High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation

Terms of reference

347. The General Assembly, in its resolution 33/134 of 19 December 1978, having recognized the role of technical cooperation among developing countries for initiating, designing, organizing and promoting cooperation so that developing countries could create, acquire, adapt, transfer and pool knowledge and experience for their mutual benefit and for achieving national and collective self-reliance, and having declared that the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, held at Buenos Aires from 30 August to 12 September 1978, was a major step in the strengthening of cooperation among developing countries and that the implementation of its recommendations constituted a major contribution in the evolution of international cooperation for development and in the establishment of the new international economic order, endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries[33] as an important instrument of the international community to intensify and strengthen cooperation among developing countries, and decided to entrust the overall intergovernmental review of technical cooperation among developing countries within the United Nations system to a high-level meeting of representatives of all States participating in the United Nations Development Programme, to be convened by the Administrator of the Programme in accordance with the provisions of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action.

348. In its resolution 35/202 of 16 December 1980, the General Assembly decided that the High-level Meeting should be named High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, with the same functions and frame of reference as those outlined in recommendation 37 and other relevant recommendations of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action.

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[33] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), part one, chap. I.

349. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 58/220 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly decided to change the name of the Committee to High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, with no change in its mandate or in the scope of its activities.

350. In paragraph 13 of its resolution 62/209 of 19 December 2007, the General Assembly decided to convene a High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, no later than the first half of 2009, and requested the President of the Assembly to entrust to the President of the High-level Committee with undertaking the necessary consultations with Member States in order to prepare for the proposed conference.

Reporting procedure

351. The Committee reports to the General Assembly through the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund and the Council. Its reports are presented as supplements to the *Official Records of the General Assembly*.

Frequency of meetings

352. The Committee meets once every two years in odd-numbered years.

3. United Nations Children's Fund

Terms of reference

353. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was created by the General Assembly in its resolution 57 (I) of 11 December 1946 under the name "International Children's Emergency Fund" as a temporary fund "to be utilized for the benefit of children and adolescents of countries which were the victims of aggression". In paragraph 3 of the same resolution, the Assembly decided that the "Fund shall be administered by an Executive Director under policies, including the determination of programmes and allocation of funds, established by an Executive Board in accordance with such principles as might be laid down by the Economic and Social Council and its Social Commission".

354. The terms of reference of the Fund were set out as follows in paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 57 (I):

(a) For the benefit of children and adolescents of countries which were victims of aggression and in order to assist in their rehabilitation;

(b) For the benefit of children and adolescents of countries at present receiving assistance from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration;

(c) For child health purposes generally, giving high priority to the children of countries victims of aggression.

355. The General Assembly, in its resolution 417 (V) of 1 December 1950, "recognizing the necessity for continued action to relieve the sufferings of children, particularly in underdeveloped countries and countries that had been subjected to the devastation of war and to other calamities", decided that, during the period of the Fund's existence:

> the Board, in accordance with such principles as may be laid down by the Economic and Social Council and its Social Commission, shall, with due regard to the urgency of the needs and available resources, formulate the policies, determine the programmes and allocate the resources of the Fund for the purpose of meeting, through the provision of supplies, training and advice, emergency and long-range needs of children and their continuing needs particularly in underdeveloped countries, with a view to strengthening, wherever this may be appropriate, the permanent child health and child welfare programmes of the countries receiving assistance; that the Executive Board shall take all necessary steps to ensure close collaboration between the Administration of the Fund and the specialized agencies, pursuant to the agreements between the United Nations and the specialized agencies; ... that the General Assembly will again consider the future of the Fund at the expiration of three years, with the object of continuing the Fund on a permanent basis.

356. The Fund was placed on a permanent footing by the General Assembly in its resolution 802 (VIII) of 6 October 1953, by which the Assembly reaffirmed the pertinent provisions of its resolutions 57 (I) and 417 (V), with the exception of any reference to time limits contained in those resolutions. In the same resolution, the Assembly decided to change the name of the organization to the "United Nations Children's Fund, retaining the symbol UNICEF".

Membership and composition of the Executive Board

357. In accordance with paragraph 22 of annex I to General Assembly resolution 48/162, the functions of the Executive Board are:

(a) To implement the policies formulated by the Assembly and the coordination and guidance received from the Council;

(b) To receive information from and give guidance to the head of UNICEF on its work;

(c) To ensure that the activities and operational strategies of UNICEF are consistent with the overall policy guidance set forth by the Assembly and the Council, in accordance with their respective responsibility as set out in the Charter;

(d) To monitor the performance of UNICEF;

(e) To approve programmes, including country programmes, as appropriate;

(f) To decide on administrative and financial plans and budgets;

(g) To recommend new initiatives to the Council and, through the Council, to the Assembly, as necessary;

(h) To encourage and examine new programme initiatives;

(i) To submit annual reports to the Council at its substantive session, which could contain recommendations, where appropriate, for the improvement of field-level coordination.

358. In accordance with the provisions of annex I to General Assembly resolution 48/162, the Executive Board consists of 36 members, to be elected by the Council

from States Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency according to the following pattern:

(a) Eight seats from African States;

(b) Seven seats from Asian States;

(c) Four seats from Eastern European States;

(d) Five seats from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Twelve seats from Western European and other States.

Term of office

359. The term of office of members is three years.

Reporting procedure

360. The Executive Board reports to the Council. Its reports are presented as supplements to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Frequency of meetings

361. The Executive Board holds an annual session and regular sessions between the annual sessions, as required, usually two per year.

4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Terms of reference

362. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was established as an organ of the General Assembly and given its terms of reference by the Assembly in its resolution 1995 (XIX) of 30 December 1964. The principal functions of UNCTAD, as set out in section II, paragraph 3, of that resolution are as follows:

(a) To promote international trade, especially with a view to accelerating economic development, particularly trade between countries at different stages of development, between developing countries and between countries with different systems of economic and social organization, taking into account the functions performed by existing international organizations;

(b) To formulate principles and policies on international trade and related problems of economic development;

(c) To make proposals for putting the said principles and policies into effect and to take such other steps within its competence as may be relevant to this end, having regard to differences in economic systems and stages of development;

(d) Generally, to review and facilitate the coordination of activities of other institutions within the United Nations system in the field of international trade and related problems of economic development, and in this regard to cooperate with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council with respect to the performance of their responsibilities for coordination under the Charter of the United Nations;

(e) To initiate action, where appropriate, in cooperation with the competent organs of the United Nations for the negotiation and adoption of multilateral legal instruments in the field of trade, with due regard to the adequacy of existing organs of negotiation and without duplication of their activities;

(f) To be available as a centre for harmonizing the trade and related development policies of Government and regional economic groupings in pursuance of Article 1 of the Charter;

(g) To deal with any other matters within the scope of its competence.

363. The General Assembly, in its resolution 31/159 of 21 December 1976, affirmed, in the context of section I of Conference resolution 90 (IV) of 30 May 1976, that:

> the functions mentioned therein should be strengthened in order to increase the effectiveness of the Conference as an organ of the General Assembly for deliberation, negotiation, review and implementation in the field of international trade and related issues of international economic cooperation which would play a major role in the improvement of the conditions of international trade, the acceleration of the growth of the world economy, including in particular the economic development of developing countries, and in the realization of the objectives of Assembly resolutions 3201 (S-VI), 3202 (S-VI), 3281 (XXIX) and 3362 (S-VII).

364. In paragraph 18 of the annex to its resolution 32/197, on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, the General Assembly decided that, in the light of its resolution 31/159, appropriate measures should be taken to enable UNCTAD, within available resources, effectively to play the major role envisaged in Conference resolution 90 (IV) as an organ of the Assembly for deliberation, negotiation, review and implementation in the field of international trade and related areas of international economic cooperation, bearing in mind the need to maintain its close and cooperative relationship with the Assembly and to cooperate with the Council in carrying out the Council's responsibilities under the Charter.

365. In its resolution 34/196 of 19 December 1979, the General Assembly endorsed Conference resolution 114 (V) of 3 June 1979 on institutional issues and called for the necessary action for its full implementation. In particular in section I of resolution 114 (V), the Conference had invited the Assembly to take the necessary action for strengthening UNCTAD in accordance with the relevant provisions of Assembly resolutions 1995 (XIX) and 32/197 and Conference resolution 90 (IV), taking into account the mandates of other international organizations and bodies.

366. In its resolution 59/221 of 22 December 2004, the General Assembly welcomed the outcome of the eleventh session of the Conference which, inter alia, reaffirmed the continued commitment of the international community to supporting the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in fulfilling its mandate in consensus-building, research and policy analysis, and in technical assistance on trade and development.

Trade and Development Board

367. The General Assembly, in paragraph 4 of its resolution 1995 (XIX), established the Trade and Development Board as part of the United Nations machinery in the economic field and, in paragraphs 14 to 23 of that resolution, outlined its functions as follows:

(a) When the Conference is not in session, to carry out the functions that fall within the competence of the Conference;

(b) To keep under review and take appropriate action within its competence for the implementation of the recommendations, declarations, resolutions and other decisions of the Conference and to ensure the continuity of its work;

(c) To make or initiate studies and reports in the field of trade and related problems of development;

(d) To request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to prepare such reports, studies or other documents as it may deem appropriate;

(e) As required, to make arrangements to obtain reports from and establish links with intergovernmental bodies whose activities are relevant to its functions, and in order to avoid duplication to avail itself, whenever possible, of the relevant reports made to the Council and other United Nations bodies;

(f) To establish close and continuous links with the regional commissions of the United Nations and to establish such links with other relevant regional intergovernmental bodies;

(g) In its relations with organs and agencies within the United Nations system, to act in conformity with the responsibilities of the Council under the Charter, particularly those of coordination, and with the relationship agreements with the agencies concerned;

(h) To serve as a preparatory committee for future sessions of the Conference and, to that end, to initiate the preparation of documents, including a provisional agenda, for consideration by the Conference, as well as make recommendations as to the appropriate date and place for its convening;

(i) To establish such subsidiary organs as may be necessary to the effective discharge of its functions.

Subsidiary bodies

368. Pursuant to decisions taken at the twelfth session of the Conference, held in April 2008, the Board has the following subsidiary bodies: (a) Working Party on the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme Budget (see Conference resolution 114 (V) of 3 June 1979 and Trade and Development Board decision 156 (XVII) of 1 September 1977); (b) Trade and Development Commission; and (c) Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission.

Membership and composition

369. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 31/2 of 29 September 1976, the membership of the Board is open to all members of the Conference. The members of the Conference, as indicated in Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX), are

those States that are Members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Reporting procedure

370. Paragraph 22 of General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX) provides that "the Board shall report to the Conference and it shall also report annually on its activities to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. The Council may transmit to the Assembly such comments on the reports as it may deem necessary". The reports of the Board are presented as supplements to the *Official Records of the General Assembly*.

Frequency of meetings

371. In accordance with the decision taken by the Conference at its ninth session, the Board meets once a year in a regular session for two weeks in October and, in addition, holds a number of executive sessions, each lasting one day. It may also meet in special session between the sessions of the Conference, which are normally convened at intervals of not more than four years.

5. United Nations Development Fund for Women

Terms of reference

372. The United Nations Development Fund for Women has its origins in the voluntary fund for the International Women's Year (Council resolution 1850 (LVI) of 16 May 1974). At its thirtieth session, the General Assembly, at its 2441st plenary meeting, on 15 December 1975, decided that the voluntary fund for the International Women's Year should be extended to cover the period of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 31/133 of 16 December 1976, the Assembly adopted the criteria and arrangements for the management of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, as follows:

(a) Criteria:

The resources of the Fund should be utilized to supplement activities in the following areas designed to implement the goals of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, priority being given to the related programmes and projects of the least developed, landlocked and island countries among developing countries:

(i) Technical cooperation activities;

(ii) Development and/or strengthening of regional and international programmes;

(iii) Development and implementation of joint interorganizational programmes;

(iv) Research, data collection and analysis, relevant to (i), (ii) and (iii) above;

(v) Communication support and public information activities designed to promote the goals of the Decade and, in particular, the activities undertaken under (i), (ii) and (iii) above;

(vi) In the selection of projects and programmes, special consideration should be given to those which benefit rural women, poor women in urban areas and other marginal groups of women, especially the disadvantaged;

(b) Arrangements:

The General Assembly endorses the arrangements for the future management of the Fund contained in the annex to the present resolution.

373. In paragraph 3 of the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the President of the Assembly to select five Member States, each of which should appoint a representative to serve on the Consultative Committee on the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women to advise the Secretary-General on the application to the use of the Fund of the criteria set forth in paragraph 1 [of resolution 31/133].

374. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 39/125 of 14 December 1984, the General Assembly decided "that the activities of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women shall be continued through establishment of a separate and identifiable entity in autonomous association with the United Nations Development Programme, which will play an innovative and catalytic role in relation to the United Nations overall system of development cooperation".

375. In the annex to that resolution, the United Nations Development Fund for Women was established as a separate and identifiable entity in autonomous association with the United Nations Development Programme. In accordance with the arrangements for the future management of the Fund, the Administrator of UNDP was to be accountable for all aspects of the management and operations of the Fund and a Consultative Committee would advise the Administrator on all policy matters relating to the activities of the Fund. All of the operations of the Voluntary Fund were transferred to the Fund, the resources of which should be used mainly within two priority areas: first, to serve as a catalyst, with the goal of ensuring the appropriate involvement of women in mainstream development activities, as often as possible at the pre-investment stage; and second, to support innovative and experimental activities benefiting women in line with national and regional priorities. The Administrator was to delegate the management of the Fund and its administration, including responsibility for the mobilization of resources, to the Director of the Fund, who was to have authority to conduct all matters related to its mandate and who was to be accountable directly to the Administrator.

376. In its resolution 40/104 of 13 December 1985, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction that the establishment of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, in autonomous association with the United Nations Development Programme, was effected on the agreed target date of 1 July 1985, in accordance with the arrangements set out in General Assembly resolution 39/125, and approved the name United Nations Development Fund for Women.

377. In its resolution 62/135 of 18 December 2007, the General Assembly, noting the importance of the work of the Consultative Committee in policy and programme directions, commended the focus by the Fund, in accordance with its mandate as set out in the annex to resolution 39/125, on strategic programmes in its three key thematic areas of work, in line with its strategic plan, 2008-2011, namely, enhancing women's economic security and rights, ending violence against women and reducing

the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among women and achieving gender equality in democratic governance, as well as eradicating feminized poverty and supporting innovative programming in the context of the Beijing Platform for Action and commitments made at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.[34]

Membership and composition of the Consultative Committee on the Fund and term of office of its members

378. In conformity with the annex to General Assembly resolution 39/125, the President of the Assembly is required to designate with due regard for the financing of the Fund from voluntary contributions and to equitable geographical distribution, five Member States to serve on the Consultative Committee for a period of three years. Each State member of the Consultative Committee should designate a person with relevant expertise and experience in development cooperation activities, including those benefiting women, to serve on the Committee. The five regional groups are represented on the Consultative Committee.

Reporting procedure

379. In its resolution 31/133, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually to it on the management of the Fund. In paragraph 12 of the annex to that resolution, it further states that "an annual report showing funds available, pledges and payments received and the expenditures made from the Fund shall be prepared by the Controller and submitted to the General Assembly and, as appropriate, to the Commission on the Status of Women".

380. As outlined in paragraphs 15 and 16 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 39/125:

> the Director [of the Fund] shall prepare substantive and financial progress reports on the use of the Fund for the Administrator to submit to the Consultative Committee. Taking into account the advice of the Consultative Committee, the Administrator shall submit to the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme an annual report on the operations, management and budget of the Fund. He shall submit a similar report to the General Assembly, to be referred to the Second Committee for consideration of its technical cooperation aspects and also to the Third Committee.

The reports of the Administrator are issued as documents of the General Assembly.

Frequency of meetings

381. The Consultative Committee meets twice a year.

6. United Nations Development Programme

Terms of reference

382. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 2029 (XX) of 22 November 1965. In the resolution, the Assembly decided "to combine the Expanded Programme of

[34] See E/CN.6/2005/2 and Corr.1.

Technical Assistance and the Special Fund in a programme to be known as the United Nations Development Programme, it being understood that the special characteristics and operations of the two programmes, as well as two separate funds, will be maintained and that, as hitherto, contributions may be pledged to the two programmes separately". The Special Fund had been established by the Assembly in its resolution 1240 (XIII) of 14 October 1958 to provide, inter alia, "systematic and sustained assistance in fields essential to the integrated technical, economic and social development of the less developed countries". A Governing Council of the Special Fund was also established by the same resolution to "provide general policy guidance on the administration and operations of the Special Fund".

383. The General Assembly, in its resolution 2029 (XX), also established a Governing Council of UNDP "to perform the functions previously exercised by the Governing Council of the Special Fund and the Technical Assistance Committee, including the consideration and approval of projects and programmes and the allocation of funds; in addition, it shall provide general policy guidance and direction for the United Nations Development Programme as a whole, as well as for the United Nations regular programmes of technical assistance".

384. The basic principles and purposes of UNDP are outlined in detail in the annex to General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV) of 11 December 1970. The responsibility of the Governing Council is set forth in paragraph 35 of the annex as follows: "The Governing Council has overall responsibility for ensuring that the resources of the Programme are employed with maximum efficiency and effectiveness in assisting the development of the developing countries".

385. As set out in paragraph (e) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 3405 (XXX) of 28 November 1975, the general guidelines for the orientation of UNDP were to ensure, inter alia, that:

(a) The basic purpose of technical cooperation should be the promotion of self-reliance in developing countries;

(b) The selection of priority areas in which to seek the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme should remain the exclusive responsibility of the Governments of the recipient countries; in that context, the Programme should respond favourably to requests for meeting the most urgent and critical needs of each developing country, taking into account the importance of reaching the poorest and most vulnerable sections of their societies and enhancing the quality of their life;

(c) Technical cooperation should be seen in terms of output or the results to be achieved, rather than in terms of input;

(d) The United Nations should provide, where appropriate, equipment and material resources, adopt a more liberal policy towards local cost financing and be flexible in requirements for counterpart personnel;

(e) Governments and institutions in recipient countries should be increasingly entrusted with the responsibility for executing projects assisted by the United Nations Development Programme;

(f) Technical cooperation should be provided at any of the levels and stages of the development process;

(g) The United Nations Development Programme should more often enter into partnership with capital assistance sources;

(h) In the context of new dimensions of technical cooperation, special attention should be paid to the requirements of the least developed among the developing countries.

386. In its decision 94/14, the Executive Board of UNDP and of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) decided that "the overall mission of UNDP should be to assist programme countries in their endeavour to realize sustainable human development, in line with their national development programmes and priorities". In decision 95/22, the Executive Board urged UNDP, given poverty eradication as the overriding priority in the UNDP programmes, to concentrate on areas where it had demonstrable comparative advantage, in particular capacity-building in the most needed regions and countries, in particular the least developed countries, especially in Africa.

387. Pursuant to those decisions, the mandate of UNDP is to help countries develop national capacity to achieve sustainable human development, giving overriding priority to eradicating poverty and building equity. Other vital objectives include the advancement of women, the regeneration of the environment and the creation of sustainable livelihoods. In its decision 96/29 of 15 May 1996, the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA endorsed the UNDP mission statement attached as an annex to that decision.

Membership and composition of the Executive Board

388. In paragraph 21 of annex I to its resolution 48/162, the General Assembly decided that the current governing body of UNDP/UNFPA should be transformed into an Executive Board, subject to the authority of the Economic and Social Council. The functions of the Executive Board, as set out in paragraph 22 of the annex, are as follows:

(a) To implement the policies formulated by the Assembly and the coordination and guidance received from the Council;

(b) To receive information from and give guidance to the head of each fund or programme on its work;

(c) To ensure that the activities and operational strategies of each fund or programme are consistent with the overall policy guidance set forth by the Assembly and the Council, in accordance with their respective responsibility as set out in the Charter;

(d) To monitor the performance of the fund or programme;

(e) To approve programmes, including country programmes, as appropriate;

(f) To decide on administrative and financial plans and budgets;

(g) To recommend new initiatives to the Council and, through the Council, to the Assembly as necessary;

(h) To encourage and examine new programme initiatives;

(i) To submit annual reports to the Council at its substantive session, which could include recommendations, where appropriate, for improvement of field-level coordination.

389. In accordance with the provisions of annex I to General Assembly resolution 48/162, the Executive Board consists of 36 members, to be elected by the Council from among States Members of the United Nations or members of specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency, subject to the following conditions:

(a) Eight seats for African States;

(b) Seven seats for Asian States;

(c) Five seats for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(d) Twelve seats for Western European and other States;

(e) Four seats for Eastern European States.

Term of office

390. The term of office of members of the Executive Board is three years (General Assembly resolution 2813 (XXVI) of 14 December 1971, para. 1 (d)).

Reporting procedure

391. The Executive Board reports to the Council. Its reports are presented as supplements to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Frequency of meetings

392. The Executive Board holds an annual session and regular sessions between the annual sessions, as required.

7. United Nations Environment Programme

Terms of reference

393. The General Assembly, in its resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, aware of the urgent need for a permanent institutional arrangement within the United Nations system for the protection and improvement of the environment, decided to establish a Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) with the following main functions and responsibilities:

(a) To promote international cooperation in the field of the environment and to recommend, as appropriate, policies to this end;

(b) To provide general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes within the United Nations system;

(c) To receive and review the periodic reports of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, referred to in section II, paragraph 2 [of the resolution], on the implementation of environmental programmes within the United Nations system;

(d) To keep under review the world environmental situation in order to ensure that emerging environmental problems of wide international significance receive appropriate and adequate consideration by Governments;

(e) To promote the contribution of the relevant international scientific and other professional communities to the acquisition, assessment and exchange of environmental knowledge and information and, as appropriate, to the technical aspects of the formulation and implementation of environmental programmes within the United Nations system;

(f) To maintain under continuing review the impact of national and international environmental policies and measures on developing countries, as well as the problem of additional costs that may be incurred by developing countries in the implementation of environmental programmes and projects, and to ensure that such programmes and projects shall be compatible with the development plans and priorities of those countries;

(g) To review and approve annually the programme of utilization of resources of the Environment Fund [established in section III of the resolution].

394. In the same resolution, the General Assembly decided that a small secretariat should be established in the United Nations to serve as a focal point for environmental action and coordination within the United Nations system in such a way as to ensure a high degree of effective management.

395. The mandate of UNEP was reinforced in 1992 by the General Assembly in its endorsement of Agenda 21, chapter 38, paragraphs 21 to 23 (resolution 47/190).

396. The Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme,[35] adopted by the Governing Council of UNEP in February 1997, further redefined the role of UNEP which, as endorsed by the General Assembly in paragraph 123 of resolution S-19/2 of 28 June 1997, "is to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, that promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment".

Membership and composition of the Governing Council

397. In accordance with section I, paragraph 1, of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), the Governing Council is composed of 58 members elected by the Assembly on the following basis:

(a) Sixteen seats for African States;

(b) Thirteen seats for Asian States;

(c) Six seats for Eastern European States;

(d) Ten seats for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Thirteen seats for Western European and other States.

[35] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/52/25), annex, decision 19/1, annex.

Term of office

398. The term of office of members of the Governing Council is four years (General Assembly decision 43/406 of 24 October 1988).

Reporting procedure

399. In section I, paragraph 3, of its resolution 2997 (XXVII), the General Assembly decided "that the Governing Council shall report annually to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council, which will transmit to the Assembly such comments on the report as it may deem necessary, particularly with regard to questions of coordination and to the relationship of environmental policies and programmes within the United Nations system to overall economic and social policies and priorities". The reports of the Governing Council are presented as supplements to the *Official Records of the General Assembly*.

Frequency of meetings

400. The Governing Council met annually until 1987. In its resolution 42/185 of 11 December 1987, the General Assembly decided that the regular sessions of the Council should be held in odd-numbered years, beginning in 1989.

401. In its resolution 53/242 of 28 July 1999, the Assembly welcomed the proposal to institute an annual, ministerial-level, global environmental forum, with the Governing Council constituting the forum in the years that it meets in regular sessions and, in alternate years, with the forum taking the form of a special session of the Governing Council. The first Global Ministerial Environment Forum/sixth special session of the Governing Council was held in May 2000 and since that time, has continued to meet biennially in even-numbered years.

8. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Terms of reference

402. In its resolution 319 (IV) of 3 December 1949, the General Assembly decided "to establish, as of 1 January 1951, a High Commissioner's Office for Refugees" and "to renew, no later than at its eighth regular session, the arrangements for the High Commissioner's Office for Refugees with a view to determining whether the Office should be continued beyond 31 December 1953". The Assembly decided subsequently to continue the Office of the High Commissioner for further periods of five years, as of 1 January 1954, by its resolutions 727 (VIII) of 23 October 1953, 1165 (XII) of 26 November 1957, 1783 (XVII) of 7 December 1962, 2294 (XXII) of 11 December 1967, 2957 (XXVII) of 12 December 1972, 32/68 of 8 December 1977, 37/196 of 18 December 1982, 42/108 of 7 December 1987, 47/104 of 16 December 1992, 52/104 of 9 February 1998, and 57/186 of 18 December 2002, the most recent resolution covering the period 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2008.

403. The annex to General Assembly resolution 319 (IV) provides that "the High Commissioner should be elected by the General Assembly, on the nomination of the Secretary-General, for a term of three years from 1 January 1951". The duration of subsequent mandates has varied, never exceeding five years. The current High Commissioner was elected by the Assembly in its decision 59/420 of 27 May 2005, for a period of five years ending 14 June 2010.

404. The terms of reference of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees were first set out in General Assembly resolution 319 (IV) and further elaborated in Assembly resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950, the annex to which contains the statute of the Office. According to paragraph 1 of the statute, "the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, acting under the authority of the General Assembly, shall assume the function of providing international protection, under the auspices of the United Nations, to refugees who fall within the scope of the present statute and of seeking permanent solutions for the problem of refugees by assisting Governments and, subject to the approval of the Governments concerned, private organizations to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of such refugees, or their assimilation within new national communities".

405. Under paragraph 8 of the statute, the High Commissioner shall provide for the protection of refugees falling under the competence of his Office by:

(a) Promoting the conclusion and ratification of international conventions for the protection of refugees, supervising their application and proposing amendments thereto;

(b) Promoting through special agreements with Governments the execution of any measures calculated to improve the situation of refugees and to reduce the number requiring protection;

(c) Assisting governmental and private efforts to promote voluntary repatriation or assimilation within new national communities;

(d) Promoting the admission of refugees, not excluding those in the most destitute categories, to the territories of States;

(e) Endeavouring to obtain permission for refugees to transfer their assets and especially those necessary for their resettlement;

(f) Obtaining from Governments information concerning the number and conditions of refugees in their territories and the laws and regulations concerning them;

(g) Keeping in close touch with the Governments and intergovernmental organizations concerned;

(h) Establishing contact in such manner as he may think best with private organizations dealing with refugee questions;

(i) Facilitating the coordination of the efforts of private organizations concerned with the welfare of refugees.

Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner

406. At the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 1166 (XII) of 26 November 1957, the Council, in its resolution 672 (XXV) of 30 April 1958, established an Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to take the place of the Executive Committee of the United Nations Refugee Fund. The terms of reference of the Executive Committee were set forth in Assembly resolution 1166 (XII), as follows:

(a) To give directives to the High Commissioner for the liquidation of the United Nations Refugee Fund;

(b) To advise the High Commissioner, at his request, in the exercise of his functions under the statute of his Office;

(c) To advise the High Commissioner as to whether it is appropriate for international assistance to be provided through his Office in order to help solve specific refugee problems remaining unsolved after 31 December 1958 or arising after that date;

(d) To authorize the High Commissioner to make appeals for funds to enable him to solve the refugee problems referred to in subparagraph (c) above;

(e) To approve projects for assistance to refugees coming within the scope of subparagraph (c) above;

(f) To give directives to the High Commissioner for the use of the emergency fund to be established under the terms of paragraph 7 [of resolution 1166 (XII)].

Membership and composition of the Executive Committee

407. General Assembly resolution 1166 (XII) provides that the Executive Committee should "consist of representatives of ... States Members of the United Nations or members of any of the specialized agencies, to be elected by the Council on the widest geographical basis from those States with a demonstrated interest in, and devotion to, the solution of the refugee problem". The Executive Committee currently consists of 76 members.

Term of office

408. The term of office of members is normally for the duration of the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Reporting procedure

409. In accordance with paragraph 7 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 319 (IV), the High Commissioner reports annually to the Assembly through the Council. The Executive Committee reports likewise. The report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the General Assembly*.

Frequency of meetings

410. The Executive Committee meets once a year.

9. United Nations Population Fund

Terms of reference

411. The United Nations Population Fund was established in 1967 as a trust fund (subsequently United Nations Fund for Population Activities) by the Secretary-General in response to Council resolution 1084 (XXXIX) of 30 July 1965 and General Assembly resolution 2211 (XXI) of 17 December 1966 calling for an expanded programme of action in the field of population. Subsequently, the Secretary-General requested the Administrator of UNDP to administer the United Nations Fund for Population Activities.

412. The General Assembly, in paragraph 2 of its resolution 3019 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972, decided "to place the United Nations Fund for Population Activities under the authority of the General Assembly"; it also decided "without prejudice to the overall responsibilities and policy functions of the Economic and Social Council, that the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, subject to conditions to be established by the Economic and Social Council, shall be the governing body of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities"; and it invited "the Governing Council to concern itself with the financial and administrative policies relating to the work programme, the fund-raising methods and the annual budget of the Fund".

413. The General Assembly, in paragraph 3 of the same resolution, invited the Governing Council "to organize itself in such a way that it can exercise effectively these functions, taking into account the separate identity of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and its need to operate under the guidance of the Economic and Social Council, in close relationship with interested Governments and with appropriate international and national bodies, governmental and non-governmental, interested in population activities".

414. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 1763 (LIV) of 18 May 1973, the Council stated that the aims and purposes of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities were:

(a) To build up, on an international basis, with the assistance of the competent bodies of the United Nations system, the knowledge and the capacity to respond to national, regional, interregional and global needs in the population and family planning fields; to promote coordination in planning and programming; and to cooperate with all concerned;

(b) To promote awareness, both in developed and in developing countries, of the social, economic and environmental implications of national and international population problems, of the human rights aspects of family planning, and of possible strategies to deal with them, in accordance with the plans and priorities of each country;

(c) To extend systematic and sustained assistance to developing countries at their request in dealing with their population problems, such assistance to be afforded in forms and by means requested by the recipient countries and best suited to meet the individual country's needs;

(d) To play a leading role in the United Nations system in promoting population programmes and to coordinate projects supported by the Fund.

415. The Council, in paragraph 2 of the same resolution, decided "that the United Nations Fund for Population Activities should invite countries to utilize the most appropriate implementing agents for their programmes, recognizing that the primary responsibility for implementing rests with the countries concerned".

416. In resolution 2025 (LXI) of 4 August 1976, the Council endorsed the following general principles to be applied by UNFPA in making future allocations of resources:

(a) To promote population activities proposed in international strategies, particularly the World Population Plan of Action;

(b) To meet the needs of developing countries which have the most urgent need for assistance in the area of population activities, in view of their population problems;

(c) To respect the sovereign right of each nation to formulate, promote and implement its own population policies;

(d) To promote recipient countries' self-reliance;

(e) To give special attention to meeting the needs of disadvantaged population groups.

417. These five general principles and the request were subsequently incorporated into General Assembly resolution 31/170 of 21 December 1976.

418. In its resolution 34/104 of 14 December 1979, the General Assembly, inter alia:

(a) Affirmed that the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, placed under the authority of the General Assembly by resolution 3019 (XXVII), was a subsidiary organ of the Assembly in terms of Article 22 of the Charter, without prejudice to section V of the annex to Assembly resolution 32/197, on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, or to the mandates of other organizations of the United Nations system concerned with population;

(b) Invited the Governing Council of UNDP to consider devoting a specific period of time during its sessions to adequate and separate consideration of items relating to UNFPA;

(c) Invited the Secretary-General to arrange, in consultation with the members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (subsequently, United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination), for the United Nations Fund for Population Activities to participate in all aspects of the work of that Committee and its subsidiary machinery;

(d) Reaffirmed that UNFPA should continue to avail itself of the services of UNDP, including those of its resident representatives.

419. By its decision 42/430 of 11 December 1987, the General Assembly changed the name of the Fund to United Nations Population Fund, while retaining the abbreviation UNFPA, on the understanding that the change of name would in no way change the mandate, aims and purpose of the Fund or the role and functions of the Governing Council of UNDP, the Economic and Social Council and the Assembly with respect to the Fund.

420. By its resolution 48/162, the General Assembly decided that the governing body of UNDP/UNFPA should be transformed into an Executive Board (see para. 388 above).

421. By its decision 50/438 of 20 December 1995, the General Assembly endorsed the agreement between UNDP and UNFPA to designate Fund resident country directors as Fund representatives, on the understanding that the Fund would take measures to enhance cooperation with and active support for resident coordinators for operational activities of the United Nations, bearing in mind General Assembly

resolution 47/199, and on the understanding that the agreement would not result in increased administrative expenditure for the Fund.

10. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Terms of reference

422. The General Assembly, by its resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949, established the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) "to carry out in collaboration with local Governments the direct relief and works programmes as recommended by the Economic Survey Mission" (resolution 302 (IV), para. 7 (a)). The Assembly has extended the Agency's mandate several times, most recently until 30 June 2011, by its resolution 62/102 of 17 December 2007.

423. By resolution 302 (IV), the General Assembly also established an Advisory Commission to advise and assist the Director (now known as Commissioner-General) of the Agency in the execution of the programme.

424. In its resolution 2656 (XXV) of 7 December 1970, the General Assembly, having noted with grave concern the acute financial situation of the Agency, established "a Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, consisting of nine Member States, to study all aspects of financing of the Agency", which was to assist the Secretary-General and Commissioner-General in reaching solutions to the problems posed by the Agency's financial crisis. The Assembly has each year extended the Working Group's mandate.

Reporting procedure

425. In paragraph 21 of its resolution 302 (IV), the General Assembly requested the Commissioner-General, who, by paragraph 9 (a) of the resolution was made responsible to the Assembly for the operation of the programme, to submit to the Assembly an annual report on the work of the Agency and to the Secretary-General such other reports as the Agency might wish to bring to the attention of the Members of the United Nations, or its appropriate organs. The report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the General Assembly*.

11. World Food Programme

Terms of reference

426. The World Food Programme (WFP) was established initially on an experimental basis, as a joint programme of the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), by the General Assembly in its resolution 1714 (XVI) of 19 December 1961.

427. The Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes was established by the General Assembly in the same resolution, under the name "United Nations/FAO Intergovernmental Committee", "to provide guidance on the policy, administration and operations" of the World Food Programme.

428. Paragraph 9 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 1714 (XVI), provides that, subject to the guidance of the Intergovernmental Committee, the Programme will be carried on by a joint FAO/United Nations administrative unit.

Paragraph 10 of the annex requires that, in the administration of the Programme, attention should be paid to:

(a) Establishing adequate and orderly procedures on a world basis for meeting emergency food needs and emergencies inherent in chronic malnutrition (this could include the establishment of food reserves);

(b) Assisting in preschool and school feeding;

(c) Implementing pilot projects, with the multilateral use of food as an aid to economic and social development, particularly when related to labour-intensive projects and rural welfare.

429. The Programme was extended by the General Assembly in its resolution 2095 (XX) of 20 December 1965, "on a continuing basis for as long as multilateral food aid is found feasible and desirable, on the understanding that the Programme will be regularly reviewed before each pledging conference and that, if circumstances so require, it may be enlarged, curtailed or terminated at the end of any period for which resources have been pledged".

Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes

430. The General Assembly, in its resolution 3404 (XXX) of 28 November 1975, decided that "the United Nations/FAO Intergovernmental Committee of the World Food Programme shall be reconstituted as the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes" and that, "in addition to discharging the functions hitherto exercised by the Intergovernmental Committee, the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes shall help to evolve and coordinate short-term and longer-term food aid policies recommended by the World Food Conference" and should in particular:

(a) Provide general guidance on the policy, administration and operation of the World Food Programme;

(b) Provide a forum for intergovernmental consultations on national and international food aid programmes and policies;

(c) Review periodically general trends in food aid requirements and availabilities;

(d) Recommend to Governments, through the World Food Council, improvements in food aid policies and programmes on such matters as programme priorities, commodity composition of food aid and other related subjects;

(e) Formulate proposals for the more effective coordination of multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental food aid programmes, including emergency food aid;

(f) Review periodically the implementation of the recommendations made by the World Food Conference on food aid policies.

Transformation of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes into the Executive Board of the World Food Programme

431. In its resolution 48/162, the General Assembly decided that the governing bodies of UNDP/UNFPA and of UNICEF should be transformed into Executive Boards. It also decided that the same arrangements should apply to the Committee

on Food Aid Policies and Programmes of the World Food Programme, and that consultations between the United Nations and FAO should be undertaken as soon as possible for that purpose, in view of the fact that the World Food Programme was an autonomous joint organ of both (Assembly resolution 48/162, annex I, para. 30).

432. At its thirty-eighth session, held in Rome from 12 to 16 December 1994, the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes considered the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 48/162. It approved the necessary changes to the General Regulations of WFP and a draft resolution for consideration by the General Assembly and the Conference of FAO, through the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO, respectively. The General Assembly and the Conference of FAO created the Executive Board of the World Food Programme through the adoption of parallel resolutions: 50/8 of 1 November 1995 and 9/95 of 31 October 1995, respectively.

Executive Board of the World Food Programme

433. The Executive Board of WFP assumed its functions in January 1996. The new General Regulations and Rules of the World Food Programme were adopted by the General Assembly and the Conference of FAO in decision 52/449 of 18 December 1997 and resolution 11/97 of 17 November 1997, respectively, and came into force with effect from 1 January 1998. Appendix B of the General Regulations, containing the distribution of seats of the Executive Board, was amended in 1999 by the General Assembly in resolution 53/223 of 7 April 1999 and the Conference of FAO in resolution 6/99 of 13 November 1999.

434. Further amendments to the General Regulations were endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 2007/220 of 12 July 2007 and approved by the General Assembly in its decision 62/541 of 19 December 2007. The amendments are contained in the Council decision, which also sets out amendments to the General Rules.

Membership and composition

435. In accordance with the General Regulations, the Executive Board is composed of 36 States Members of the United Nations or members of FAO, elected by the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO from among the members of the respective organizations.

Term of office

436. The term of office of members of the Executive Board is three years.

Functions

437. Article VI of the General Regulations set the powers and functions of the Executive Board. The Board is responsible for providing intergovernmental support and specific policy direction to and supervision of the activities of WFP in accordance with the overall policy guidance of the General Assembly, the FAO Conference, the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that WFP is responsive to the needs and priorities of recipient countries.

438. Among its functions, the Board is responsible for evolving and coordinating short-term and longer-term food aid policies, the intergovernmental supervision and direction of the management of WFP, and reviewing, modifying as necessary, and approving programmes, projects and activities submitted to it by the Executive Director.

439. Beginning in 1999, the Executive Board undertook a review of the way in which it conducted its business. At the annual session and the third regular session, in 2000, the Board approved a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the governance of WFP by focusing on strategy, policy, oversight and accountability.

Reporting procedures

440. The Executive Board is subject to the general authority of the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO and reports to both Councils. Its reports are presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*.

Frequency of meetings

441. The Board holds an annual session and two regular sessions each year.

12. Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

Terms of reference

442. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/162 of 19 December 1977, the Economic and Social Council, by resolution 1978/1 of 12 January 1978, decided to transform the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning (which had been established by the Council in its resolution 903 C (XXXIV) of 2 August 1962) into the Commission on Human Settlements.

443. In section II, paragraph 3, of its resolution 32/162, the General Assembly provided that the Commission would have the following main objectives:

(a) To assist countries and regions in increasing and improving their own efforts to solve human settlements problems;

(b) To promote greater international cooperation in order to increase the availability of resources of developing countries and regions;

(c) To promote the integral concept of human settlements and a comprehensive approach to human settlements problems in all countries;

(d) To strengthen cooperation and co-participation in this domain among all countries and regions.

444. The General Assembly, in section II, paragraph 4, of the same resolution, decided that the Commission would have the following main functions and responsibilities:

(a) To develop and promote policy objectives, priorities and guidelines regarding existing and planned programmes of work in the field of human settlements, as formulated in the recommendations of Habitat: United Nations

Conference on Human Settlements and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly;

(b) To follow closely the activities of the organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations in the field of human settlements and to propose, when appropriate, ways and means by which the overall policy objectives and goals in the field of human settlements within the United Nations system might best be achieved;

(c) To study, in the context of the recommendations for national action of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, new issues, problems and especially solutions in the field of human settlements, particularly those of a regional or international character;

(d) To give overall policy guidance and carry out supervision of the operations of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation;[36]

(e) To review and approve periodically the utilization of funds at its disposal for carrying out human settlements activities at the global, regional and subregional levels;

(f) To provide overall direction to the secretariat of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);

(g) To review and provide guidance on the programme of the United Nations Audio-Visual Information Centre on Human Settlements[37] established by virtue of General Assembly resolution 31/115 of 16 December 1976.

445. In its resolution 51/177 of 16 December 1996, the General Assembly reaffirmed that the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and relevant resolutions, including Assembly resolutions 48/162 and 50/227, together with the Commission on Human Settlements, should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism to oversee the coordination of activities for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda[38] (see also Assembly resolution 56/206 of 21 December 2001, sect. III).

446. In its resolution 52/192 of 18 December 1997, the Assembly reaffirmed that the Commission on Human Settlements, as a standing committee of the Economic and Social Council, should have a central role in monitoring, within the United Nations system, the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and advising the Council thereon. It reaffirmed the existing mandate of the Commission as set out in resolution 32/162, while stressing the normative and catalytic character of the mandate, in particular the responsibility to give overall policy guidance to and supervise the operations of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), including the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation. The Assembly further decided that the Commission, in fulfilling its mandate, should assist the Council in monitoring, reviewing and assessing the progress made in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, inter alia, through the analysis of relevant inputs from Governments, local authorities and their associations, relevant

[36] The Foundation subsequently became an integral part of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, now known as the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

[37] Now also an integral part of UN-Habitat.

[38] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The Assembly decided that the Commission should identify issues on which system-wide coordination needed to be improved and modalities for promoting such coordination, in order to assist the Economic and Social Council in its coordination function.

447. In its resolution 56/206, the General Assembly decided to transform the Commission on Human Settlements into the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, to be known as UN-Habitat, a subsidiary organ of the Assembly. It confirmed that the Governing Council should have the objectives, functions and responsibilities set out in its resolution 32/162 and in paragraph 222 of the Habitat Agenda, and would be the decision-making body for the Programme.

448. The Assembly adopted the rules of procedure of the Governing Council in its resolution 58/227 of 23 December 2003.

449. At its twenty-fifth special session, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium,[39] the follow-up of which is a responsibility of UN-Habitat concomitant with the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

Membership, composition and term of office

450. In accordance with paragraph 4 of section I.A of General Assembly resolution 56/206, the Governing Council has 58 members, elected by the Economic and Social Council for a four-year term on the following basis:

(a) Sixteen seats for African States;

(b) Thirteen seats for Asian States;

(c) Six seats for Eastern European States;

(d) Ten seats for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Thirteen seats for Western European and other States.

Reporting procedure

451. The Governing Council reports to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council (Assembly resolution 56/206, sect. I.A, para. 7). Its report is presented as a supplement to the *Official Records of the General Assembly*.

Frequency of meetings

452. The Governing Council meets biennially (General Assembly resolution 56/206).

Election and term of office of the Bureau

453. The Bureau is elected at the beginning of each biennial session and holds office for two years. It consists of a President, three Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur. The posts of President and Rapporteur rotate on a strict geographical basis.

[39] General Assembly resolution S-25/2, annex.

Modalities for taking action and format for recommendations

454. The Governing Council takes action on proposals by consensus, as a matter of established practice. Action may take the form of President's summaries, agreed conclusions, resolutions or decisions.

Utilization of informal consultations

455. Informal consultations are held on all texts under consideration.

Role of the Secretariat

456. The Secretariat may assist the Governing Council by drafting texts for action if specifically requested to do so by Member States.

Inclusion of a general debate in the work programme

457. The Governing Council holds a general debate.

Utilization of panel discussions and/or question-and-answer sessions

458. All formal discussions are held either in committee or in plenary.

Bodies related to the Governing Council

459. A Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat assists the Governing Council, particularly in preparing its sessions in the intersessional period. In addition, the former Commission, in its resolution 17/18 of 14 May 1999, established a committee of local authorities as an advisory board in charge of strengthening the dialogue with cities and other international associations in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

460. In its resolution 56/206, the General Assembly affirmed that the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities was an advisory body to the Executive Director of the Programme. The Assembly also affirmed that the Urban Forum was a non-legislative forum in which experts could exchange views when the Governing Council was not in session.

13. Peacebuilding Commission

Terms of reference

461. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 60/180 of 20 December 2005, the General Assembly, reaffirming the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[40] recalling, in particular, paragraphs 97 to 105 thereof, and recognizing that development, peace and security and human rights were interlinked and mutually reinforcing, decided, acting concurrently with the Security Council,[41] in accordance with Articles 7, 22 and 29 of the Charter, with a view to operationalizing the decision by the 2005 World Summit, to establish the Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body.

[40] General Assembly resolution 60/1.

[41] See Council resolution 1645 (2005).

462. In the same resolution, the Assembly also decided that the following should be the main purposes of the Commission:

(a) To bring together all relevant actors to marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery;

(b) To focus attention on the reconstruction and institution-building efforts necessary for recovery from conflict and to support the development of integrated strategies in order to lay the foundation for sustainable development;

(c) To provide recommendations and information to improve the coordination of all relevant actors within and outside the United Nations, to develop best practices, to help to ensure predictable financing for early recovery activities and to extend the period of attention given by the international community to post-conflict recovery.

Methods of work of the Commission

463. In its resolution 60/180, the General Assembly also decided the following in regard to the proposed methods of work of the Commission:

(a) The Commission should meet in various configurations (ibid., para. 3);

(b) Country-specific meetings of the Commission, upon the invitation of the Organizational Committee (see below, paras. 471-476), should include as members, in addition to members of the Committee, representatives from (i) the country under consideration, (ii) countries in the region engaged in the post-conflict process and other countries that are involved in relief efforts and/or political dialogue, as well as relevant regional and subregional organizations, (iii) the major financial, troop and civilian police contributors involved in the recovery effort, (iv) the senior United Nations representative in the field and other relevant United Nations representatives, and (v) such regional and international financial institutions as may be relevant (ibid., para. 7);

(c) A representative of the Secretary-General should be invited to participate in all meetings of the Commission (ibid., para. 8);

(d) Representatives of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other institutional donors should be invited to participate in all meetings of the Commission in a manner suitable to their governing arrangements (ibid., para. 9);

(e) The Commission should work in cooperation with national or transitional authorities, where possible, in the country under consideration with a view to ensuring national ownership of the peacebuilding process (ibid., para. 10);

(f) The Commission should, where appropriate, work in close consultation with regional and subregional organizations to ensure their involvement in the peacebuilding process in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter (ibid., para. 11).

464. At its 7th meeting, held on 16 May 2007, the Organizational Committee decided, in accordance with paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 60/180, to issue a standing invitation to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Community (represented by the European Commission) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to participate in all meetings of the Commission (see PBC/1/OC/SR.7, para. 73).

465. The General Assembly decided that the Commission should act in all matters on the basis of consensus of its members (resolution 60/180, para. 18).

Provisional rules of procedure of the Commission

466. The provisional rules of procedure of the Commission, as adopted by the Organizational Committee at its first meeting on 23 June 2006, are contained in PBC/1/OC/3.

Participation of and consultation with other actors involved in the peacebuilding process

467. In paragraph 19 of its resolution 60/180, the General Assembly noted the importance of participation of regional and local actors and, in paragraph 21, encouraged the Commission to consult with civil society, non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, and the private sector engaged in peacebuilding activities, as appropriate.

Reporting procedure

468. In accordance with paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 60/180, the Commission is to make the outcome of its discussions and recommendations publicly available as United Nations documents to all relevant bodies and actors, including the international financial institutions. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the same resolution, the Commission submits an annual report to the General Assembly, which holds an annual debate for the purpose of reviewing it. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1646 (2005) of 20 December 2005, the report is also submitted to the Security Council for annual debate.

Advice to be provided to the Security Council

469. In paragraph 16 of resolution 60/180, the General Assembly underlined that, in post-conflict situations on the agenda of the Security Council with which it is actively seized, in particular when there is a United Nations-mandated peacekeeping mission on the ground or under way and given the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter, the main purpose of the Commission would be to provide advice to the Council at its request.

Advice provided to the Economic and Social Council

470. In paragraph 17 of resolution 60/180, the Assembly also underlined that the advice of the Commission to provide sustained attention as countries move from transitional recovery towards development would be of particular relevance to the Economic and Social Council, bearing in mind its role as a principal organ for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development.

Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission

471. In paragraph 4 of resolution 60/180, the General Assembly decided that the Commission should have a standing Organizational Committee, responsible for developing its own rules of procedure and working methods, comprising:

(a) Seven members of the Security Council, including permanent members, selected according to rules and procedures decided by the Council;

(b) Seven members of the Economic and Social Council, elected from regional groups according to rules and procedures decided by the Council, giving due consideration to those countries that have experienced post-conflict recovery;

(c) Five top providers of assessed contributions to United Nations budgets and of voluntary contributions to United Nations funds, programmes and agencies, including a standing peacebuilding fund, that are not among those selected in (a) or (b) above, selected by and from among the ten top providers, giving due consideration to the size of their contributions, according to a list provided by the Secretary-General, based on the average annual contributions in the previous three calendar years for which statistical data are available;

(d) Five top providers of military personnel and civilian police to United Nations missions that are not among those selected in (a), (b) or (c) above, selected by and from among the ten top providers, giving due consideration to the size of their contributions, according to a list provided by the Secretary-General, based on the average monthly contributions in the previous three calendar years for which statistical data are available;

(e) Giving due consideration to representation from all regional groups in the overall composition of the Committee and to representation from countries that have experienced post-conflict recovery, seven additional members elected according to rules and procedures decided by the General Assembly.

Election of members of the Organizational Committee

472. With regard to the election of seven members of the Organizational Committee, the Security Council, in paragraph 1 of its resolution 1646 (2005) decided, pursuant to paragraph 4 (a) of resolution 1645 (2005) of 20 December 2005, "that the permanent members listed in Article 23 (1) of the Charter shall be members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission and that, in addition, the Council shall select annually two of its elected members to participate in the Organizational Committee".

473. With regard to the election of seven members of the Organizational Committee, paragraphs 1 to 3 of General Assembly resolution 60/261 of 8 May 2006 read as follows:

> 1. *Notes* that the elections and/or selections that have taken place, in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 4 (*a*) to (*d*) of General Assembly resolution 60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005), have resulted in the following distribution of seats for this year among the five regional groups in the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission:
>
> (a) Five members from African States;
>
> (b) Seven members from Asian States;
>
> (c) Two members from Eastern European States;
>
> (d) One member from Latin American and Caribbean States;
>
> (e) Nine members from Western European and other States;

2. *Decides* that the seven seats for election by the General Assembly for membership in the Organizational Committee for this year shall be distributed among the five regional groups as follows:

(a) Two seats for African States;

(b) One seat for Asian States;

(c) One seat for Eastern European States;

(d) Three seats for Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) No seats for Western European and other States;

3. *Also decides* that the rules of procedure and established practice of the General Assembly for the election of members of its subsidiary bodies shall apply to its election of members of the Organizational Committee.

474. With regard to the membership of the Economic and Social Council on the Organizational Committee, paragraphs 1 to 4 of Council resolution 2006/3 of 8 May 2006 read as follows:

1. *Decides* that the distribution of the seven seats allocated to the Economic and Social Council on the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission shall be as follows:

(a) One seat for each of the five regional groups, namely, African States, Asian States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States and Western European and other States;

(b) For the purpose of the first election, the two remaining seats shall be allocated to the regional groups of African States and Asian States;

2. *Also decides* that members of the Council shall be elected to the Organizational Committee for a two-year term with the possibility, as applicable, of sharing the term within the concerned regional group for the seats allocated to it, subject to the concurrence of the Council;

3. *Further decides* that elections from among its members to the Organizational Committee shall be held every other year;

4. *Decides* that the rules of procedure and established practice of the Council for the election of members of its subsidiary bodies shall apply to the election of members of the Organizational Committee by the Council.

Term of office of members of the Organizational Committee

475. Members of the Organizational Committee serve for renewable terms of two years, as applicable (General Assembly resolution 60/180, para. 6; see also Assembly resolution 60/261, para. 4).

Establishment of the agenda of the Organizational Committee

476. The Assembly decided, in paragraph 12 of its resolution 60/180, that the Organizational Committee should, giving due consideration to maintaining a balance in addressing situations in countries in different regions in accordance with the main purposes of the Commission as stipulated above, establish the agenda of the Commission based on the following:

(a) Requests for advice from the Security Council;

(b) Requests for advice from the Economic and Social Council or the General Assembly with the consent of a concerned Member State in exceptional circumstances on the verge of lapsing or relapsing into conflict and with which the Security Council is not seized in accordance with Article 12 of the Charter;

(c) Requests for advice from Member States in exceptional circumstances on the verge of lapsing or relapsing into conflict and which are not on the agenda of the Security Council;

(d) Requests for advice from the Secretary-General.

14. Human Rights Council

Terms of reference

477. By resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, the General Assembly established the Human Rights Council as a subsidiary organ of the Assembly, in replacement of the Commission on Human Rights, which the Economic and Social Council, by resolution 2006/2 of 22 March 2006, then abolished.

478. In paragraphs 2 to 5 of the same resolution, the General Assembly decided that:

(a) The Council should be responsible for promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner;

(b) The Council should address situations of violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations, and make recommendations thereon. It should also promote the effective coordination and the mainstreaming of human rights within the United Nations system;

(c) The work of the Council should be guided by the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, constructive international dialogue and cooperation, with a view to enhancing the promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development;

(d) The Council should, inter alia:

(i) Promote human rights education and learning as well as advisory services, technical assistance and capacity-building, to be provided in consultation with and with the consent of Member States concerned;

(ii) Serve as a forum for dialogue on thematic issues on all human rights;

(iii) Make recommendations to the General Assembly for the further development of international law in the field of human rights;

(iv) Promote the full implementation of human rights obligations undertaken by States and follow-up to the goals and commitments related to the promotion and protection of human rights emanating from United Nations conferences and summits;

(v) Undertake a universal periodic review, based on objective and reliable information, of the fulfilment by each State of its human rights obligations and

commitments in a manner which ensures universality of coverage and equal treatment with respect to all States; the review should be a cooperative mechanism, based on an interactive dialogue, with the full involvement of the country concerned and with consideration given to its capacity-building needs;

(vi) Contribute, through dialogue and cooperation, towards the prevention of human rights violations and respond promptly to human rights emergencies;

(vii) Assume the role and responsibilities of the Commission on Human Rights relating to the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993;

(viii) Work in close cooperation in the field of human rights with Governments, regional organizations, national human rights institutions and civil society;

(ix) Make recommendations with regard to the promotion and protection of human rights;

(x) Submit an annual report to the General Assembly.

479. In paragraph 11 of the same resolution, the General Assembly decided that the Human Rights Council should apply the rules of procedure established for committees of the General Assembly, as applicable, unless subsequently otherwise decided by the Assembly or the Council, and also decided that the participation of and consultation with observers, including States that are not members of the Council, the specialized agencies, other intergovernmental organizations and national human rights institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations, should be based on arrangements, including Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and practices observed by the Commission on Human Rights, while ensuring the most effective contribution of those entities.

480. By resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007, the Human Rights Council adopted the draft text entitled "United Nations Human Rights Council: institution-building", contained in the annex to that resolution. That decision was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/219 of 22 December 2007. Section I of the aforementioned text contains details of the universal periodic review mechanism, in compliance with the mandate assigned to the Human Rights Council by the Assembly in resolution 60/251; section VI sets out its methods of work and section VII contains its rules of procedure.

Implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

481. The General Assembly, in paragraph 31 of its resolution 61/149 of 19 December 2006, decided that the Assembly, through its role in policy formulation, the Economic and Social Council, through its role in overall guidance and coordination, in accordance with their respective roles under the Charter and Assembly resolution 50/227, and the Human Rights Council should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental process for the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.[42]

[42] See A/CONF.189/12 and Corr.1, chap. I.

482. In paragraph 34 of the same resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed that the Human Rights Council should have a central role in the monitoring of the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action within the United Nations system and in advising the General Assembly thereon.

483. In paragraph 33 of the same resolution, the Assembly decided to convene in 2009 a review conference on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action to be conducted within the framework of the Assembly, and requested the Human Rights Council to undertake preparations for the event.

Preparatory Committee for the Durban Review Conference

484. In its resolution 3/2 of 8 December 2006, the Human Rights Council decided that it would act as the Preparatory Committee for the Durban Review Conference, and that the Preparatory Committee would be open to the participation of all States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies and also to the participation of observers in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly.

485. In its decision 6/105 of 28 September 2007, the Human Rights Council invited the Preparatory Committee to submit its reports to the General Assembly. The Preparatory Committee has since submitted to the Assembly a report on the work of its organizational session and its first session (A/62/375), which was welcomed by the Assembly in its resolution 62/143 of 18 December 2007.

Membership and composition

486. In accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 60/251, the Human Rights Council consists of 47 Member States, which are elected directly and individually by secret ballot by the majority of the members of the Assembly, the membership to be based on equitable geographical distribution, according to the following pattern:

(a) Thirteen members from African States;

(b) Thirteen members from Asian States;

(c) Six members from Eastern European States;

(d) Eight members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Seven members from Western European and other States.

Term of office

487. The term of office of members is three years; members are not eligible for immediate re-election after two consecutive terms (General Assembly resolution 60/251, para. 7).

Reporting procedure

488. In accordance with paragraph 5 (j) of General Assembly resolution 60/251, the Human Rights Council submits an annual report to the Assembly. Its reports are presented as supplements to the *Official Records of the General Assembly*.

Frequency of meetings

489. In accordance with paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 60/251, the Human Rights Council meets regularly throughout the year. It schedules no fewer than three sessions per year, including a main session, for a total duration of no less than 10 weeks. It is able to hold special sessions, when needed, at the request of a member of the Council with the support of one third of its membership.

Election and terms of office of the Bureau

490. In accordance with rule 9 of its rules of procedure (see Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, annex, sect. VII), the Human Rights Council, at its organizational meeting at the beginning of each Council year, elects its Bureau, which consists of a President and four Vice-Presidents, one of whom serves as Rapporteur. Due regard is given to equitable geographical rotation in the election of the Bureau. In conformity with rule 11, members of the Bureau hold office for a period of one year and are not eligible for immediate re-election to the same post.

Methods of work of the sessions of the Human Rights Council

491. The Human Rights Council holds a general debate on each agenda item. Pursuant to section VI of the annex to its resolution 5/1, the working methods of the Council are as follows:

(a) The Council holds a high-level segment once a year during its main session, followed by a general segment, wherein delegations that did not participate in the high-level segment may deliver general statements (ibid., para. 116);

(b) Utilization of other work formats, such as panel debates, seminars and round-table meetings, including their topics and modalities, is decided by the Council on a case-by-case basis. They are not to be used to substitute or replace existing human rights mechanisms and established methods of work (ibid., para. 115);

(c) The Council generally adopts resolutions and decisions. Other outcomes may include recommendations, conclusions, summaries of discussion and statements of the President. Other outcomes should supplement and not replace resolutions and decisions (ibid., para. 118);

(d) The President of the Council holds open-ended meetings on resolutions, decisions and other related business in order to provide information on the status of such drafts. They do not serve as a negotiating forum (ibid., para. 112);

(e) Briefings on prospective resolutions or decisions are organized by interested delegations for the purpose of informing other delegations of resolutions and/or decisions that have been tabled or are intended to be tabled (ibid., para. 111);

(f) Informal consultations are the primary means for the negotiation of draft resolutions and/or decisions. At least one informal open-ended consultation is to be held on each draft resolution and/or decision before it is considered for action by the Council (ibid., para. 113).

Subsidiary bodies of the Human Rights Council

492. In pursuance of the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 6 of its resolution 60/251 and of Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, the Human Rights Council continues to review all mandates, mechanisms, functions and responsibilities of the Commission on Human Rights, including the structure of its subsidiary machinery.

Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

493. The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances was created by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 20 (XXXVI) of 29 February 1980, by which it decided "to establish for a period of one year a working group consisting of five of its members, to serve as experts in their individual capacities, to examine questions relevant to enforced or involuntary disappearances of persons". The mandate and terms of reference were renewed by the Commission each year and, since 1985, renewed for a period of two years. In its resolution 7/12 of 27 March 2008, the Human Rights Council decided to extend the mandate of the Working Group for a further period of three years.

494. The Working Group consists of five members of the Human Rights Council, appointed in their personal capacity by the President of the Council. As at present constituted, the Working Group has one member each from African States, Asian States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States and Western European and other States. The Working Group reports to the Human Rights Council.

Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

495. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention was established for a three-year period by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1991/42 of 5 March 1991, approved by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1991/243 of 31 May 1991. By resolution 1997/50 of 15 April 1997, the Commission assigned a revised mandate to the Working Group, which was to investigate cases of deprivation of liberty imposed arbitrarily, provided that no final decision has been taken in such cases by local courts in conformity with domestic law, with the relevant standards set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with the relevant international instruments accepted by the States concerned. The Working Group also examines issues related to the administrative custody of asylum-seekers and immigrants.

496. The Working Group is currently composed of five individual members from five regional groups. Membership is limited to two terms of three years (Economic and Social Council decision 2000/284 of 28 July 2000).

497. In its resolution 6/4 of 28 September 2007, the Human Rights Council decided to extend the mandate of the Working Group for a further period of three years, in accordance with resolutions 1991/42 and 1997/50 of the Commission on Human Rights, and requested the Working Group to submit an annual report to the Council on its activities, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Open-ended Working Group on the Right to Development

498. In its resolution 1998/72 of 22 April 1998, approved by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1998/269 of 30 July 1998, the Commission on Human Rights decided to establish an open-ended working group on the right to development as a follow-up mechanism to the Declaration on the Right to Development,[43] with the following mandate: (a) to monitor and review progress made in the promotion and implementation of the right to development as elaborated in the Declaration on the Right to Development, at the national and international levels, providing recommendations thereon and further analysing obstacles to its full enjoyment, focusing each year on specific commitments in the Declaration; (b) to review reports and other information submitted by States, United Nations agencies, other relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations on the relationship between their activities and the right to development; and (c) to present for the consideration of the Commission on Human Rights a sessional report on its deliberations, including advice to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights with regard to the implementation of the right to development, and suggesting possible programmes of technical assistance at the request of interested countries with the aim of promoting the implementation of the right to development.

499. The Open-ended Working Group succeeded two previous bodies: a working group on the right to development mandated to identify obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration (Commission resolution 1993/22 of 4 March 1993); and an intergovernmental group of experts with a mandate to elaborate a strategy for the implementation and promotion of the right to development (Commission resolution 1996/15 of 11 April 1996). Its mandate was subsequently renewed by the Commission.

500. By its resolution 4/4 of 30 March 2007, the Human Rights Council decided to renew the mandate of the Working Group for a period of two years, and that the Working Group should convene annual sessions of five working days and present its reports to the Council. By the same resolution, the Council decided also to renew the mandate of the high-level task force on the implementation of the right to development, established within the framework of the Working Group, for a period of two years, and that the task force would convene annual sessions of seven working days and present its reports to the Working Group.

Intergovernmental Working Group on the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

501. In its resolution 56/266 of 27 March 2002, the General Assembly endorsed the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Following its consideration of the question, the Commission on Human Rights, in its resolution 2002/68 of 25 April 2002, decided to establish an intergovernmental working group, with the following mandate: (a) to make recommendations with a view to the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action; and (b) to prepare complementary international standards to strengthen and update international instruments against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia

[43] General Assembly resolution 41/128, annex.

and related intolerance in all their aspects. The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 2002/270 of 25 July 2002, approved the decision of the Commission. The Commission on Human Rights subsequently renewed the mandate of the Group.

502. In its resolution 1/5 of 30 June 2006, the Human Rights Council decided to extend the mandate of the Intergovernmental Working Group for a further period of three years.

Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent

503. Following the convening of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, the Commission on Human Rights, by resolution 2002/68, established a working group of five independent experts on people of African descent, appointed on the basis of equitable geographical representation by the Chairman of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission, in consultation with regional groups, to meet for two sessions of five working days each prior to the fifty-ninth session of the Commission. The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 2002/270, approved the decision of the Commission, including the mandate of the Working Group, which was requested, inter alia, to elaborate short, medium and long-term proposals for the elimination of racial discrimination against people of African descent, including proposals for a mechanism to monitor and promote all of their human rights, and to submit a report to the Commission at its fifty-ninth session. The Working Group continues to meet and reports to the Human Rights Council. It is involved in the preparations for the Durban Review Conference.

Working group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination

504. In its resolution 2005/2 of 7 April 2005, the Commission on Human Rights decided to establish a working group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination, composed of five independent experts, one from each regional group, to meet for a period of three years. The Working Group was charged with elaborating and presenting concrete proposals on possible new standards, general guidelines or basic principles encouraging the further protection of human rights, in particular the right of peoples to self-determination, while facing current and emergent threats posed by mercenaries or mercenary-related activities. The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 2005/255 of 25 July 2005, endorsed the decision of the Commission, including its request to the Working Group that it report annually to the Commission and the General Assembly.

505. In its resolution 7/21 of 28 March 2008, the Human Rights Council decided to extend the mandate of the Working Group for a period of three years, authorized the Working Group to hold three sessions per year of five working days each and requested it to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session and to the Council in 2009.

Ad Hoc Committee of the Human Rights Council on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards

506. By decision 3/103 of 8 December 2006, the Human Rights Council, pursuant to a decision of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination,

Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, established the Ad Hoc Committee of the Human Rights Council on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards, with the mandate to elaborate, as a matter of priority and necessity, complementary standards in the form of either a convention or an additional protocol or protocols to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,[44] filling the existing gaps in the Convention and also providing new normative standards aimed at combating all forms of contemporary racism, including incitement to racial and religious hatred. The Human Rights Council recommended that the Ad Hoc Committee should convene annual sessions of 10 working days and report regularly to the Council on the progress made in the process of the elaboration of complementary standards.

507. In paragraph (c) of the same decision, the Human Rights Council welcomed the appointment by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of the five experts on complementary standards, with the mandate to produce a base document outlining the substantive gaps in the Convention and to make recommendations on the means and avenues to bridge those gaps. The five experts were to conclude their work by June 2007.

508. In its resolution 6/21 of 28 September 2007, the Human Rights Council, regretting that the mandate of the five experts had not been accomplished, gave further instructions to the Ad Hoc Committee. (See also Council resolution 7/33 of 28 March 2008.)

Human Rights Council Advisory Committee

509. The Human Rights Council Advisory Committee was established by the Council in paragraph 65 of the annex to its resolution 5/1. The Advisory Committee is composed of 18 experts serving in their personal capacity, functions as a think tank for the Council and works at its direction. The members of the Advisory Council are elected by the Council by secret ballot, according to the following pattern:

(a) Five members from African States;

(b) Five members from Asian States;

(c) Two members from Eastern European States;

(d) Three members from Latin American and Caribbean States;

(e) Three members from Western European and other States.

Members serve for a period of three years and are eligible for re-election once.

510. The function of the Advisory Committee is to provide expertise to the Council in the manner and form requested by it, focusing mainly on studies and research-based advice. Such expertise is rendered only upon the Council's request, in compliance with its resolutions and under its guidance (Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, annex, para. 75).

[44] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 660, No. 9464.

Bodies established to monitor the complaints procedure

(i) Working Group on Communications

511. The Human Rights Council Advisory Committee is to appoint five of its members, one from each regional group, with due regard to gender balance, to constitute the Working Group on Communications (Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, annex, para. 91). The members of the Working Group are appointed for three years and their mandate is renewable only once (ibid., para. 93). The Working Group is to decide on the admissibility of communications relating to violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, assess the merits of the allegations of violations, and provide the Working Group on Situations with a file containing all admissible communications, as well as recommendations thereon. It is to meet at least twice a year for five working days each session (ibid., para. 100).

(ii) Working Group on Situations

512. Each regional group is to appoint a representative of a State member of the Human Rights Council, with due consideration to gender balance, to serve on the Working Group on Situations. Members, who serve in their personal capacity, are appointed for one year and their mandate may be renewed once, if the State concerned is a member of the Council (Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, annex, paras. 96 and 97). On the basis of information and recommendations provided by the Working Group on Communications, the Working Group on Situations is mandated to present the Council with a report on consistent patterns of gross and reliably attested violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms and to make recommendations to the Council on the course of action to be taken (ibid., para. 98). It is to meet at least twice a year for five working days each session (ibid., para. 100).

Forum on Minority Issues

513. In its resolution 6/15 of 28 September 2007, the Human Rights Council decided to establish a forum to provide a platform for promoting dialogue and cooperation on issues pertaining to persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, which should provide thematic contributions and expertise to the work of the independent expert on minority issues. The Forum on Minority Issues is to identify and analyse best practices, challenges, opportunities and initiatives for the further implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.[45]

514. In paragraph 2 of the same resolution, the Human Rights Council decided that the Forum should (a) be open to the participation of States, United Nations mechanisms, bodies and specialized agencies, funds and programmes, intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations and mechanisms in the field of human rights, national human rights institutions and other relevant national bodies, academics and experts on minority issues and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; and (b) also be open to other non-governmental organizations whose aims and purposes are in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter, based on arrangements, including Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, and

[45] General Assembly resolution 47/135, annex.

practices observed by the Commission on Human Rights, through an open and transparent accreditation procedure in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Human Rights Council, which will provide for timely information on participation and consultations with States concerned.

515. In paragraph 4 of the same resolution, the Human Rights Council requested its President to appoint for each session, on the basis of regional rotation and in consultation with regional groups, a chairperson of the Forum among experts on minority issues, nominated by members and observers of the Council. In accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 of the resolution, the chairperson, serving in his or her personal capacity, shall be responsible for the preparation of a summary of the discussion of the Forum, which is to be made available to all participants.

516. In accordance with paragraph 3 of the same resolution, the Forum is to meet annually for two working days allocated to thematic discussions.

Expert mechanism on the rights of indigenous peoples

517. In paragraph 1 of its resolution 6/36 of 14 December 2007, the Human Rights Council decided to establish a subsidiary expert mechanism to provide it with thematic expertise on the rights of indigenous peoples in the manner and form requested by the Council, focusing mainly on studies and research-based advice. The mechanism may suggest proposals to the Council for its consideration and approval, within the scope of its work as set out by the Council.

518. In paragraph 3 of the same resolution, the Council decided that the expert mechanism should consist of five independent experts, the selection of which should be carried out in accordance with the procedure established in paragraphs 39 to 53 of the annex to its resolution 5/1. In accordance with paragraph 8 of the resolution, the expert mechanism is to meet once annually for three days in its first year and thereafter for up to five days, and its sessions may be a combination of open and private meetings.

519. In paragraph 9 of the same resolution, the Council decided that: (a) the annual meeting of the expert mechanism should be open to the participation, as observers, of States, United Nations mechanisms, bodies and specialized agencies, funds and programmes, intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations and mechanisms in the field of human rights, national human rights institutions and other relevant national bodies, academics and experts on indigenous issues, and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; and (b) the meeting should also be open to indigenous peoples' organizations and non-governmental organizations, whose aims and purposes are in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter, based on arrangements, including Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, and practices observed by the Commission on Human Rights, through an open and transparent accreditation procedure in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Human Rights Council, which would provide for timely information on participation and consultation with States concerned.